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ESSAYS,

ON

THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS;

CELIBACY,	DETRACTION,
WEDLOCK,	AVARICE,
SEDUCTION,	JUSTICE,
PRIDE,	GENEROSITY,
DUELLING,	TEMPERANCE,
SELF-MURDER,	EXCESS,
LYING,	DEATH.

BY THE

REV. EDWARD BARRY, M. D.

READING:

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1806.

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TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE

HENRY, LORD VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH,

LORD PRIVY SEAL, &c. &c.

MY LORD,

YOUR exaltation to the Peerage of a Country, in which you are so highly Esteemed, and to whose service, in times of peculiar difficulty, you have been faithfully devoted, cannot add to that dignity of Character, which, created by your own merit, and acknowledged by the Public voice, has long distinguished you, as a Man and a Senator.

To your Lordship, whose mind is so richly stored with variety of knowledge, I need not suggest; that the two Temples which were erected among the Romans, one to Virtue, and the other to Honor, were so constructed, that to see the latter, it was necessary to pass through the former.

You,

You, my Lord, have conspicuously proceeded to both: and though your present address is not the same, as when I was permitted to inscribe to you a former work, yet, the sound principles *of your heart remain inviolable, they cannot be altered.*

To such a Patron, I am proud of the permission which you have granted me, of dedicating these Essays.

I have the Honor to be,

MY LORD,

With the utmost respect,

Your Lordship's very faithful servant,

EDWARD BARRY.

READING, *August* 1, 1806.

Blewberry Berks

ESSAY I.

CELIBACY.

AMONG the variety of subjects, which have engaged the notice of authors; the interesting inquiries of *Celibacy* and *Wedlock*, either through accident or design, have been suffered to escape a serious investigation. Whether it has been considered right to be silent on these delicate points, and leave every person to the persuasions of his own mind; or whether from the peculiarity or the difficulty of saying any thing useful and satisfactory on such questions; or to whatever other motive we may attribute the omission, it is certain, that the world is not

much indebted to writers for faithful observations and instructions on these topics: nor in common life and society is much information to be gathered; for these subjects are particularly susceptible either of the jokes of stupid levity, or, are made the themes of pensive deliberation. From these opposite quarters, satisfactory counsel is not to be expected: but if equally distant from either, a middle path be taken, it will be a safeguard to the mind against the follies of the one and the fears of the other.

In representing the different states of *Celibacy* and *Wedlock*; instead of confining their observations to the abstract merits or demerits of these allotments; most people are for bringing them to the test of their individual experience, and so long as different tempers and constitutions live on the earth, such representations must necessarily be partial and selfish, and always liable to exception: the person who surrenders up his opinion,

and

and forbodes his own fate on observing that of another, is perpetually the shuttlecock of fancy and the barometer of accident: equally absurd and spiritless are those, who, on the false principle of watching in others the different events of *Celibacy* and *Wedlock*, make up their minds to continue in the one, or engage in the other.

The injunction of *Celibate* life, was one, among the many superstitions brought by *Pythagoras* out of Egypt, he forbad marriage to his disciples: The Pythagoreans were under such severe prohibition of marriage, that some of the Priests* purposely disabled themselves from women.

In such high esteem was the Celibacy of Priests among the Pagans, that *Æneas*, in

* As those of Cybele, and the Priests of *Diana* at Ephesus, who emasculated themselves.

Virgil is supposed to pass through the Elysian Fields, and see no other Priests in Paradise but such as had led a single life; and *Zeno*, Prince of the Stoicks, held this sort of denial in such reverence, that he never approached a woman.

From this Pagan source, the stream has continued to the present time; for their ideas of *Celibacy* are not only adopted, but their examples are followed by the Priests of the Romish Church; though this kind of abstinence did not pass as a law, nor was insisted on as a matter of Ecclesiastical conformity, till about the year six hundred. In the Council of Trent it was proposed to set the Clergy again at liberty from this yoke, but the Pope would not accede to it.

About the middle of the third century after *Christ*, it must be confessed that there were some plausible reasons for submitting

to

to a single life; for in those times of persecution, many Christians wishing to avoid the tempest, retired into deserts; and when these troubles ceased, they were either afraid of new ones, or else habit and situation had reconciled them to seclusion, and made convenient and voluntary to them, what at first originated from necessity. The important cares of that season obliged them not to engage in the world more than was absolutely unavoidable: on this account, many converts of both sexes to the Christian faith, adopted the advice of *St. Paul*, who is falsely charged with discouraging marriage in his letters to the Corinthians. Among other questions, his opinion is asked concerning the married life, and the Apostle contrives such an answer as was every way calculated for the safety and welfare of the Church in a time of persecution, and he fits his observations to the several tempers, constitutions, and circumstances of particular persons, and so keeps free of all forcible exhortation either to the married,

married, or the single state: if it be insisted on, that he appears to lean more favourably to the side of a single life, it should be remarked at the same time, that he has then a view to its advantages in a troublesome time, such as it then was: he suggests to them, that they would act prudently, if with chastity at the same time, they could refrain from marriage.

He cautions *Timothy*, whom he calls *his own son*, and for whom he felt the tenderest affection; against the absurd magazine of Pagan and Papal tenets: "*Forbidding*," as he says, "*to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God had created to be received with thanksgiving.*"

An ecclesiastic of infinite humour once undertook to write against the hardships of this duty of celibacy, imposed on the Clergy. Some of his arguments were, that God desired

all creatures to *increase* and *multiply*, and that this law could not be abrogated by an old Pope; that soldiers proceed from soldiers, and kings from kings, and why should not clerks from clerks? That *Zacharias*, father of him who baptized Christ, had a wife and children: That *St. Paul*, who was carried to the *third Heaven*, brought from thence no command for celibacy; on the contrary, he desired that *every one should have his own wife*.

But religion however it may have been misrepresented in dark and superstitious times, for the purpose of imposing on any class of mankind a life of celibacy, cannot, in this more enlightened day, without a greater reproach, be effectually urged as the authority for remaining in that state: reasons there are, and sufficient ones too, for that determination: health and even life itself may in several instances demand such caution; but it should be remembered at the same time, that with other constitutions, health and life

are more frequently endangered, if not sacrificed by refusing to nature her imperious claims.

Convenience must sometimes be allowed as a tolerable plea for remaining in the single state; but *selfishness* is more frequently the prevailing motive. The taxes chargeable on a single state, either in health, pocket, or reputation, are important considerations: besides, it is well known, that the demands of a family usually excite fresh exertions, and operate as a useful spur to industry.

The apprehension of being the cause of misery to children as yet unborn, through incompetence of circumstances, although in itself a very commendable reflection, yet does not amount to a sufficient apology for a life of celibacy.

A famous

A famous King* welcomed to his dominions all who came, for he observed, that whoever had a mouth must eat, and whoever had hands, if not born to fortune, must work for that subsistence: and although it may be said, that the poor have seldom any provision for accidents, to which they may be particularly exposed, it should be mentioned, as an honour to the feelings of this merciful country, that for every deserving and possible case of misfortune, institutions of every description are open to their succour and support.

It is asserted by some curious Etymologists, that the word *Celibacy* means the *blessedness of Heaven*;† and when the freedom and the lightness of a single life are contrasted with the cares, the troubles, and the anxieties of a married one, we must so far acknowledge the former to be preferable; but this at best is but a selfish argument; unquestionably it

 is

* The King of Prussia. † Cœli beatitudo.

is the duty of every member of society to contribute his share toward the public good, in which he has before participated, and to hand down to posterity a continuance of those advantages: for supposing that the generality of mankind from the same argument of private ease, were to remain in the single state, great would be the defalcation in the population of the country, and consequently a very alarming diminution of her strength and opulence.

In such disesteem was *Celibacy* among the Romans, that they used every possible means they could to discourage it; for nothing was more usual than for their Censors to impose a fine on old Bachelors; while prerogatives were given to persons who had many children; besides, those who led a single life were, except from their nearest relations, and under certain restrictions, incapable of receiving legacies. Among the Lacedemonians, no man could continue single beyond the

the time limited by their law-giver, without incurring severe and shameful punishments: the magistrates commanded unmarried persons every winter, to run round the public Forum naked; and to increase the contempt, they were obliged to sing a song expressive of their own ridicule: another punishment was, to exclude them from the exhibition of Spartan exercises, where young women contended naked; another severity imposed on them was, that women were allowed to drag them round an altar, beating them all the while with their fists: lastly, they were not permitted to share that respect and reverence which the younger claimed.

Plutarch observes, that no man found fault with what was said to a great Captain, who coming into an assembly, a young man, instead of rising up and making room, addressed him to this effect,

"Sir, you must not expect that attention from me, which cannot hereafter be returned by any of your children to me, when I am old."

"To live unmarried is to die unmourned;
"Add to your race; see nature's gift returned."

ESSAY II.

WEDLOCK.

HITHERTO we have dwelt on the barren ground of solitary life; it is time that we repair to the fertile groves of *Wedlock.*

Marriage is a civil and religious contract founded upon the laws of nature; and the end of it is, the legitimate propagation of mankind. Different countries, according to peculiar circumstances, have not only varied in the forms of this institution, but likewise in the extent of it.

The

The Jews esteemed it lawful for a man to marry as many wives as he pleased, provided he could maintain them; and we are informed, that those who live in the East still keep up their ancient practice of Polygamy; whereas in Germany, they are not allowed this liberty, and in Italy very rarely; and only in case a man hath lived many years with one wife and has no family.

The ancient Germans, are said by Tacitus, to be the only people among the Barbarians, who are contented with single marriages.

Mahomet allowed of Polygamy, craftily accommodating his doctrine to the humour and dispositions of the people, whom he intended to deceive.

The Grecians, according to their regular frames and constitutions, admitted but of

one

one wife, yet there is found in one of the Athenian decrees an exception to their law, where it says, "That to increase the number of men at present deficient, it shall be lawful for any person to have children by another woman besides her, that in a more strict sense is his wife."*

Not many years ago, a writer and preacher of great celebrity† undertook to vindicate the doctrine of a plurality of wives; he contends that it is as lawful for the Christians as it was for the ancient Jews to have more wives than one. With respect however to the Jewish law, it was only of a local and temporary nature, and wisely adapted, with respect to the degrees of consanguinity and other regulations of marriage, to maintain and perpetuate the separation of the Jewish people from the heathen.

When

* *Vide* Seldon, Puffendorf, &c.

† Rev. Mr. Madan.

"When we reflect," says an anonymous but able writer, "that the primitive institution of marriage limited it to one man and one woman; that this institution was adhered to by Noah and his sons, amidst the degeneracy of the age in which they lived, and in spite of the examples of Polygamy, which the accursed race of Cain had introduced; when we consider how very few the examples of this practice were among the faithful, how much it wrought its own punishment with it, and how dubious and equivocal those passages are, in which it appears to have the sanction of divine approbation, how frequently the messengers of God adapted themselves to the genius of the people to whom they were sent, and the circumstances of the times in which they lived, how often the imperfections and even the vices of the Patriarchs and people of God, in old time are recorded without any express notification of their criminality—how much is said to be commanded, which our reverence for the holiness

holiness of God and his law will only suffer us to suppose, were for wise ends permitted; above all when we consider the purity, equity, and benevolence of the Christian law; the explicit declaration of our Lord and his Apostle St. Paul respecting the institution of marriage, its design, and limitation; when we reflect too, on the testimony of the most ancient fathers, who could not possibly be ignorant of the general and common practice of the Apostolic Church; and, finally, when to these considerations we add those, which are founded in justice to the female sex, and the regulations of domestic economy and national policy we must boldly condemn the revival of Polygamy."

"The practice of Polygamy," says an eminent author,* "is brutal, destructive of friendship and moral sentiment, inconsist-

* Dr. Percival Phil. Trans.

ent with the great end of marriage; the education of children, and subversive of the natural rights of more than half of the species, besides it is injurious to population: it is a well known fact, adds he, that *Armenia*, in which a plurality of wives is not allowed, abounds more with inhabitants than any other province of the Turkish Empire."

"If we will make good laws," remarks Plato, "we must begin to regulate marriages well."

The first inhabitants of Greece lived in a state of promiscuous intercourse; no bounds were set to their passions. But *Cecrops*, who was raised King of Athens, among other useful institutions, introduced that of Matrimony: it was afterward received by all the inhabitants; for no sooner had they civilized their undisciplined manners,

ners, and acquired a taste for regularity and order, than they espoused the meritorious rights of that institution.

The Athenians required that all commanders and orators, and such as were intrusted with the public affairs, should be married and have children; for these were considered as a sort of surety and pledge to the state for the good conduct of their fathers, and without which, it was thought dangerous to commit to them the charge of the public trust.

The Church of England although she does not consider matrimony in the nature of a sacrament,* as does the Romish Church, yet she holds it to be of sacred appointment,

* The reason which some assign for calling it a sacrament, is, that it sometimes gives men the gift of *repentance*.

and therefore requires it to be solemnized by her ministers, and offers the three following arguments, not less divine than physical, for the adoption of wedlock:

First, "*It was ordained for the procreation of children, to be brought up in the fear and nurture of the Lord, and to the praise of his holy name.*"

Secondly, "*It was ordained, for a remedy against sin, and to avoid fornication, that such persons as have not the gift of continency, might marry, and keep themselves undefiled members of Christ's body.*"

Thirdly, "*It was ordained, for the mutual society, help, and comfort, that the one ought to have of the other, &c.*"*

As

* *Vide* Form of Marriage.

As the strength and glory of a kingdom consist in the ~~multitude of its subjects~~, matrimony ought to be particularly encouraged.

Among the Lacedemonians and other ancient nations, it was usual to allow portions from the public treasury for the encouragement of wedlock; hence likewise it was, that among the Romans, privileges and immunities were granted to the poor parents of three children.

But the second point in which our church views the design of marriage is, as a remedy against sin: and here indeed is a very strong argument for its early celebration; "*That such persons as have not the gift of continency might marry.*"

If the knowledge of a disease be requisite

to

to the cure; it is necessary to know and acknowledge the passions, that we may the better govern them. Philosophers who have written on these subjects are so divided in opinion, that reason hath not been able to reconcile their difference. Some of them have been satisfied with describing passions to us; but in showing their causes and effects, have omitted to teach us how to cure them: they have been more careful to make us know the poison than acquaint us with the antidote.

To deny to nature her feelings, were to overthrow the whole fabric of man: it is no more dishonourable for her to fear a danger, to hope for a good, or strengthen herself against evil, than it is to see by the organs of the eye, or to hear by those of the ear. We are not required to extinguish our passions, but only duly to balance them; rightly have they been termed the gales of life, and

it

it is our concern that they do not rise into a tempest.

St. Augustine observes, "That a virtue is the habit of a well governed mind." It is but to moderate our affections, and they will be changed into virtues; for when love and hatred, which are the sources of all other passions, shall be wisely and justly guided, they will become excellent virtues, and be trained into wisdom, temperance, fortitude, and justice. Is it not then unfair, nay even barbarous, to affect to smother some passions, which, under proper restraint, have such affinity to virtue? Is it not injustice and ingratitude to mistake the advantages which we have received from Nature? and since the Almighty has commanded the sexes in an orderly way to propogate their species; it becomes a crime* to resist this law of nature and of God.

In

* In one of the Romish Canons of the Council of Trent, is to be seen this *very extraordinary anathema:*

"If

In my succeeding Essay on *Seduction*, I shall advert to the melancholy consequences which are, alas! but too frequently produced, where these ardent desires are peremptorily checked by the ill judged bashfulness of the child, or the fierce authority of the parent.

The time of marriage unquestionably must depend on the peculiar circumstances of constitution and climate: but for a general principle of action, early marriages seem advisable.

What is designed as a remedy against any particular evil, should be exercised before that evil has triumphed, or by habit is become incorrigible: besides, early marriage gives more time, more health, and better spirits

"If any one shall say, that the state of matrimony is to be preferred before the state of virginity or celibacy; and that it is better and more happy to marry than to continue in virginity and celibacy; *Let him be accursed.*"

rits for the various duties of rearing and providing for an offspring; and may afford such parents the great happiness of beholding their own, and even their childrens' children, earning their bread by meritorious labour; and not like those, who, in the evening of life become parents, whose children are, for the greater part, puny and diseased, are probably left in distress and misery, while their parents are gone down *with grey hairs and with sorrow to the grave!* Time, therefore, which always ought to be precious, should not in this instance be disregarded.

In the selection of a partner, a less sacrifice of time than is usually made, might very safely be practised; for though the sexes demand suitable qualifications; yet the main ones confessedly are, personal beauty, mental acquirements, the distinctions of family, and the independency of fortune; from these stores,

either separately or collectively, men and women make their choice.

We will inquire into each of them. With respect to person, she, indeed it must be confessed, is the fair orator which charms, and often erects her tribunal above the empire of reason, she disdains to argue, to threaten, or beseech; it is only to behold this fascinating tyrant, and the citadel is surrendered.

What love really is, may be difficult to explain; Men feel its dominion, but cannot analyze its essence: Poets, who have interested themselves on that subject, will have it pass for a God! and lest men should blame its violence, by an affected piety strive to conceal its fury. The Platonics give love a spirit, and an absolute power over the passions; the Stoics term love a fury, and judging of its nature by effects,

effects, they cannot suppose, that the soul is well ordered, while under the dominion of such a passion.

Some Philosophers have affirmed, "That love is a pleasing wound, which man hath received from a fair object, that it is the beam of a Sun which warms him, that it is a charm, whose virtue is attraction."

All the passions seem to be set in motion from the impulse of love; which kindles desires, excites hopes, braves dangers, inspires courage, and like the heart, gives warmth, vigour, and animation to the whole frame: after all, however, it must be admitted, that love is more a matter of feeling than of argument, the subtilty of this passion remains a secret, but the operations of it are certain; nevertheless, the dictates of *reason*, the claims of *duty*, and a regard to *posterity* ought, in their single or collective force, in various

 instances,

instances, to be resolutely opposed to the furiousness of desire: but to the important considerations of personal health, so frequently disregarded in matrimonial alliances, it is seriously to be wished that more attention was paid.

"One great source of the diseases of children is, the unhealthiness of Parents. It would be as reasonable to expect a rich crop from a barren soil, as that strong and healthy children should be born of parents whose constitutions have been worn out with intemperance or disease.*

"What a dreadful inheritance is the gout, the scurvy, or the King's evil, to transmit to our offspring! how happy had it been for the heir of many a great estate, had he been born a beggar, rather than to inherit his father's fortunes

* *Vide* Dr. Buchan.

fortunes at the expense of inheriting his diseases!

"A person labouring under any incurable malady ought not to marry. He thereby not only shortens his own life, but transmits misery to others: but when both parties are deeply tainted with the scrophula, the scurvy, or the like, the effects must be still worse. If such have any issue, they must be miserable indeed. Want of attention to these things, in forming connexions for life, has rooted out more families than plague, famine, or the sword; and as long as these connexions are formed from mercenary views, the evil will be continued.*

"In our matrimonial contracts, it is amazing so little regard is had to the health and form

* The Lacedemonians condemned their king Archidamus for having married a weak, puny woman; because, said they, instead of propagating a race of heroes, you will fill the throne with a progeny of changelings.

form of the object. Our sportsmen know, that the generous courser cannot be bred out of the foundered jade, nor the sagacious spaniel out of the snarling cur. This is settled upon immutable laws. The man who marries a woman of a sickly constitution, and descended of unhealthy parents, whatever his views may be, cannot be said to act a prudent part. A diseased woman may prove fertile; should this be the case, the family must become an infirmary: what prospect of happiness the father of such a family has, we shall leave any one to judge.*"

"Great beauty," says a celebrated philosopher,† "should rather be avoided than sought

* The Jews, by their laws, were, in certain cases, forbidden to have any manner of commerce with the diseased; and indeed to this, all wise legislators ought to have a special regard. In some countries, diseased persons have actually been forbid to marry. This is an evil of a complicated kind, a natural deformity, and political mischief; and therefore requires a public consideration.

† Rosseau]

sought in marriage. Beauty soon grows familiar by possession; at the end of six weeks it is no longer any thing to the possessor; but its dangers last as long as it lasts itself: unless a handsome woman is an angel, her husband is the unhappiest of mankind.

"Desire a medium in all things, without excepting even beauty. An agreeable and engaging figure, which does not inspire love, but benevolence, is what we ought to prefer; it is without prejudice to the husband, and its advantage turns to the common profit. The graces are not lost like beauty, but are incessantly renewed; and after being married thirty years, an agreeable honest woman pleases her husband as well as the first day."

Thus far have we investigated the recommendations of person, which notwithstanding the

the many arts of invention to improve, may yet be considered as the immediate object of sight and conviction; but safely to determine on the acquirements of the mind, to call forth the beauties or the deformities of that retreat, will demand, it may be urged, a greater latitude of time for the purposes of discrimination and experience. Charms there are in person, and irresistible ones too, but unless adorned with the unfading beauties of the mind, they partake more of the fever of desire, than the chastity of love.

The qualities of mind which best recommend themselves to the sexes, depend on the diversified circumstances of habits of life, difference of education, and formation of taste: and after all, the most ill-conditioned temper, from the higher to the lower ranks of society, may be disciplined for their respective delusions, and artfully discharge the pleasing duties of courtship.

The

The accommodating thought—the persuasive sentiment—the speaking eye—the modest retirement—the fascinating smile—the impressive adieu! these alone are sufficient to put into action all the nerves of sensibility, and leave on the palpitating heart the surest tokens of eventual triumph!

If the common patience of human nature can wait in good humour for these pantomimical scenes, the allotment of human life will not afford the time. A year, perhaps two or more of irrecoverable time, out of man's small pittance, sunk for ever! and for what? to accomplish that, which without dissimulation and intrigue, might more happily be brought about in as many weeks. A miser would not thus abuse his gold!

A better plan of ascertaining the real qualities of the mind, especially those more impor-

tant considerations of suavity of disposition and integrity of principle, would be, cautiously to apply to the actual knowledge of others for that valuable information.

Courtship and Wedlock have two distinct addresses, and the ceremony and fondness usually attached to the former, give no small occasion of remonstrance when they begin to abate in the latter. But in the selection of a partner, literary acquirements, so great a treasure in the estimation of many, are not subject to this mutability; like a perennial stream they continue the same: but whether these attainments shall flow with their usual smoothness, or be agitated into a rougher current, must depend on the feelings of the possessor.

To a learned wife however, there are not a few, who have insuperable objections: Juvenal,

venal, that satirist of antiquity, points his ridicule to the learned women of his time; and the admired poet Dryden thus expresses himself:

" O! what a midnight curse has he whose side
" Is pester'd with a Mood and Figure bride!
" Let mine, ye Gods! (if such must be my fate;)
" No Logick learn, nor History translate;
" But rather be a quiet, humble fool:
" I hate a wife, to whom I go to school.
" Who climbs the Grammar Tree, distinctly knows
" Where Noun, and Verb, and Participle grows;
" Corrects her Country Neighbour, and abed,
" For breaking Priscians, breaks her Husband's head."

Still, however, reason and wisdom are more frequently united in a graceful and lovely woman than some will allow, or others desire. For strength of intellect, variety of knowledge, and intrepidity of mind, associated at the same time with all the amiable sensibilities of duty, gentleness, and affection, women are recorded on the pages of antiquity: and to the honour of the present day,

the fair constellation improves in lustre, and must not yield to them the palm of victory, either in talents, heroism, beauty, or goodness!

Let women then be encouraged to have confidence in their capacity of mental attainments, as well as their personal attractions: and in every suitable cultivation of the former, will be found a counterpoise, and the best security against the levities of the latter.

Respectable family connexions in the matrimonial contract are highly to be coveted: they are not only satisfactory pledges of the manners and education of the person concerned; but in their consequences, frequently make ample amends, for what, in the first instance, was a deficiency of wealth. In point of fortune, where other recommendations are approved, the sincerity of the person

son might be called in question, who would seriously cavil about that, if a reasonable sufficiency was on either side; and who refused to accommodate demands to circumstances.

On this subject it may not be unsuitable to bring forward the opinion of a distinguished prelate:* "Gentlemen in their marriages," says the Bishop, "ought to consider a great many things more than fortune, though generally speaking, that is the only thing sought for. A good understanding, good principles, and a good temper, with a liberal education, and acceptable person, are the first things to be considered, and certainly fortune ought to come after all these. Those bargains now in fashion, make often unhallowed marriages, in which, besides the greater evils, more fortune is often wasted, than is brought with a vain, a foolish, an indiscreet, and a hated wife. The first thought

* Bishop Burnet.

thought in chusing a wife ought to be, to find a help meet for the man: in the married state, the mutual study of both ought to be, to help and please one another."

Much advice, indeed, may be offered both to the man and the woman, for their reciprocal good conduct in the marriage state; but the best which can be given, is in that language which made their sacred covenant! There they will learn, that "*It was ordained for the mutual society, help, and comfort that the one ought to have of the other, both in prosperity and adversity.*"

The contract in many views is pleasing, but it cannot be dissembled that heavy are the discouragements to it. The pains of life, with very few exceptions indeed, are more than the pleasures. In matrimony this remark is particularly true.

The

The *hope* of adding to their stock of happiness, is the inducement of those who embark in it: but they are *certain* to increase their anxieties: even in the happiest condition of Wedlock this observation will hold good; but, sad indeed is the case with those, who are *unequally yoked together;* who cannot, or who will not live conformably to the tenor of the engagement, "*according to God's holy ordinance,*" whose views and sentiments, whose manners moral and religious are in perpetual discord: when instead of the man being *meet* for the woman, or the woman *meet* for the man, instead of promoting mutual happiness, marriage becomes the intolerable bane of it; under such unhappy circumstances, and especially where there are no children, the question naturally occurs, is separation a duty? the answer is important, and requires very serious deliberation; for this reason, it may be thought safer to bring forward an opinion of higher authority than that of the writer of these

Essays.

Essays. In that most valuable and learned work "Of the Law of Nature and Nations,"* there is a quotation made, which exactly applies to the immediate purpose; and shall here be given at length.

"Incorrigible disparity of mind, or stubborness of temper, rendering a woman unfit to live in society with such a particular man, and hindering the chief benefit of matrimony, mutual help and refreshment, is a much weightier cause of divorce, than any natural defect, any distemper, any uncleanness of body, which yet were allowed as lawful pleas by the Jewish dispensation; no partnership can oblige persons concerned, in contradiction either to the chief end of its institution, or to the intentions and hopes of both, or of either member. Now it was the design of the wise Creator, not to give man a domestic torment, but a kind help to join with him,

* *Vide* Puffendorf, book vi. chap. 1.

him, not only in the bringing of children into the world, but in the education of them, and in the whole business of life; which end, intolerable sourness of temper doth plainly pervert and destroy. It looks absurd and unreasonable, that the Canon Law should without scruple declare Impotency a sufficient cause of dissolving Matrimony, and yet allow no regard to the manners and dispositions of the parties: especially since the former may immediately be discovered; whereas 'tis usual craftily to disguise and conceal the latter, till the poor Man runs ignorantly into the snare, whence he can never be released. It is against the law of charity; nay, it is most barbarous and inhuman to confine and chain down a Man to such miseries as are not to end till his death; and which would admit of an easy cure, did not the severity of this positive ordinance stand in the way: inasmuch as God Almighty, in his laws and commands, seems to have mer-

cifully accommodated himself to the infirmity of human nature.

"The Holy Scriptures prescribe Matrimony among other reasons, for the avoiding of temptations to Incontinence. But now the Man who can find in Marriage no rest or comfort to his mind, who is perpetually teased and disturbed, by an untoward partner, must needs be assaulted with stronger temptations, than if he lived in Celibacy.

"We are commanded in Holy Scripture to remove from us all obstacles of piety: amongst the chief of which we may fairly reckon the frowardness of an incorrigible and inseparable companion. It is repugnant to nature, that two minds directly opposite, and admitting of no possibility of union, should be tied together in a bond never to be broken.

"The

"The Christian Emperors have declared it as their judgment, that the plotting of either party against the life of the other, is a good reason of divorce: and how many Men's lives have been unhappily shortened by these continual griefs and discomforts? Marriage is a Society; but human Societies, inasmuch as they are held together in a Moral Bond, consist rather in the union of Souls than of Bodies. Should we say otherwise of Marriage, we should degrade it below the coupling of beasts, in which we frequently observe some sort of affection and good-will in the mates to each other. When therefore, the soul doth not find in matrimony that sweet agreement which it sought, so ill matched a pair live rather in the misery and hardship of a prison, than in the comfort of society. Solemn oaths, if either in themselves improper, or tending to the prejudice of a third party, are capable of a dispensation; and hath not the marriage covenant a good right to the same favour? Nor will it signify any

thing to answer here, that unhappy matches are laid on men by Divine Providence, for the trial and exercise of their patience. For diseases and other calamities are most certainly sent from Heaven; and yet the application of human remedies was never forbidden in such cases." But may the wound be spared, and hence the reluctant remedy prevented.

"The knot which we endeavour to tie too tight," says the celebrated Rosseau, "breaks;" "it is the same," adds he, "in marriage, when we endeavour to give it more strength than it should have. The fidelity which it imposes on both sides is the most sacred of all laws; but the power it gives each over the other is too great. Constraint and love go ill together, and pleasure will not be commanded."

There can scarcely be a doubt, that the weighty

weighty consequence of the matrimonial obligation has discouraged not a few from venturing on it: the manacles, which are forged at the altar, for the priest to put on, have determined many not to approach him on that occasion; and as if they had been found in the *majority* of cases to be somewhat galling and oppressive, the contract is not usually made without some perturbation in both; but the balance of courage is evidently in favour of the ladies, and to their credit be it mentioned, they are in other respects better drilled for the ceremonies of that office; while the bridegroom, alas! in the midst of affected gaiety, of nuptial equipments, and comforted by the cheerful attendance of his friends, has not unfrequently betrayed more wildness of look, agitation of person, and tremulousness of voice, than sometimes can be discovered in the deportment of him, who is about to meet his final doom on the awful platform!

To overcome such unsuitable panicks as much as possible, let the encouraging view of conjugal bliss be cherished in the heart; and for so desirable an end, let the means of attaining it, be assiduously cultivated. It was a wise and true observation of *Plutarch's*; "That vessels which are compacted of divers parts, or glued together of divers pieces, will, at first, by every bruise or fall, be easily broken to pieces; but when they are strengthened by tract of time, it will be very hard to tear them asunder." This observation is particularly excellent, as it applies to matrimony.

Chastity in marriage is also a very salutary prescription for lasting respect and admiration. Marriage, which is a remedy against impure desires, should not be made the occasion of exciting them.

* " These violent delights have violent ends,
" And in their triumph die; like fire and powder,
" Which, as they kiss, consume. The sweetest honey
" Is loathsome in its own deliciousness,
" And in the taste confounds the appetite:
" Therefore love moderately; long love doth so:
" Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow."

Love and salacity are different passions, the one is refined, the other gross: amiableness alone can inspire us with the former; the most despicable wanton can provoke the latter.

Fathers and Divines of old, and Philosophers themselves, agree in their censures of extravagant propensities, and tell us that marriage should be serious, seasonable, circumspect, and mixed with severity; and that an intemperate man in wedlock, differs but little from an adulterer.† From the pen of

* Romeo and Juliet, Act ii, Scene 6.

† Adulter est uxoris propriæ amator ardentior.

of an Apostle we are commanded to *mortify inordinate affection.* A *lewd Christian* is a solecism in the language of Scripture: even the license of wedlock can never protect him against the charge of *uxorious sensuality.*

On a subject of such general interest as that of the present Essay, we have thus far enlarged: it is time, however, now to finish; and in whatever concerns the marriage state a *good conclusion* is most devoutly to be wished. "*Let no evil enter,*" was a motto placed over the doors of the married Greeks;—May such a sentiment be cherished in the heart, irradiate the countenance, and be seen in the whole deportment of those, whose duty and happiness are so essentially connected with it.

ESSAY III.

SEDUCTION.

SEDUCTION, that distressing word, which claims our present attention, means the art of tempting, deceiving, and corrupting.

The institution of marriage, which has already been recommended as the honourable provision for satisfying the demands of nature; from a false principle of education is so wrongly understood by the youthful fair, that it would be considered as the extremity of boldness to intimate their *own* wishes, and a proof of indelicacy not to turn aside from

the first overtures, which may be made to them on the subject of matrimony.

Their propensities are, perhaps, equal to those of men, though their resources are very different. Men, from their engagements in the world, from a disregard to those restraints, which in the character of a woman must be inviolable, have their desires moderated, or else they take another course, and are impaired through habits of intemperance.

Women, on the contrary, by more sedentary and sober lives, and by fewer avocations of the mind, are particularly left to solitary and strengthened imagination, while the indulgence of it, except in legal wedlock, would be fatal to their honour. It cannot therefore be sufficiently deplored, that this best remedy against Seduction, is to the most lovely part of creation, so encumbered with prohibition.

The

The inclination from being thus persecuted, is not lessened, but aggravated: and if a criminal gratification be entirely withstood; too frequently it happens, that the mind sinks into dejection, or the body pines with disease.

In opposed marriages, it is further obvious, that the person loved, if not himself restrained by noble sentiments, must have much ascendency, if not opportunity, to become the seducer; and when that is effected, too many are the hateful instances, that the lovely victim is first slighted, and then abandoned to every distracting bitter thought; to brood over that disgrace she cannot hide, that contempt and misery which are the sure companions of it. Even parents themselves will *bruise the broken reed* and plant thorns on the bed of contrition and of pain: where barbarians would have shed the tear of sympathy, they have hardened their hearts; instead of grievously reflecting on themselves, how instrumental to seduction their

severity might have been, and gradually raising up by the tenderest affection a fallen daughter, it is too often seen, that by ill-timed reproaches, cutting remonstrances, implacable wrath, and utter abandonment, many a child, against whom temptation has triumphed, has been given up to the scorn of the world, who might have been a recovered jewel to society, had defamation been less industrious, *particularly from her own sex*, and if others had used caution and clemency.

The tales of many who have sallied forth to eat the precarious, loathsome bread of prostitution, and that only during the miserable term of a diseased and contracted life, would bear an affecting testimony to the truth of these observations; and though bad examples, habit, and necessity, may have altered the first feelings of contrition and dejection, yet the spark, the vital spark of reflection, is not altogether extinguished! a serious,

serious, but an affectionate appeal to their disreputable situations, will seldom fail to penetrate them with remorse: and though at other times the semblance of gaiety may be put on; yet there is a tender interval, in which the heart will bleed, when the tear will start!

Unhappy pilgrims! they cannot but remember what they so lately were, and feel with poignant distress the situation into which, by one culpable act, they now are reduced, banished from their native homes, deserted by their betrayers; their rivals hoot at them with the triumphant hiss of malice, and those, who had envied their superior attractions, are now delighted to point at them with most fastidious disdain: thus neglected by friends, persecuted by enemies, and despised by the world; a deplorable multitude of unhappy females, beautiful and lovely daughters, who gladly would have returned, had that been permitted, as humbled

bled penitents to the bosom of parental clemency, are now prowling about the streets; and at length are become so degraded in their own estimation, so destitute of hope, and so hardened by practice, that reflection is abandoned and their manners are desperate.*

Will *parents* then, who ought to be the *guardian angels* of their daughters happiness, "*to drop a tear on their frailties, and blot them out for ever*," will they, by the bitterest invective

* The writer of these Essays has often wished that in every city, town, and country, some sort of large manufactory were established, capable of employing both sexes, in whatever department they could be found most useful; where, on expressing a desire to work, they should be welcomed, clothed, and fed, and no questions asked. Such an asylum, under suitable modifications and proper laws, would produce the most salutary effects, by receiving the outcasts of society, who, *without character* cannot be supposed to get employment, and are hence left to the vilest alternatives: in this institution the most abandoned might be fed, concealed, and what is of moment to the interests of policy, virtue, and religion, and moreover should be the design of all laws, they might here, after proper probation, recover lost characters, they might be *reformed!*

vective and implacable severity, resolutely consign their own offspring to present wretchedness, and imminently expose them to every future ill?

Can *parents* thus survey the *fair* image of themselves, without emotion and without forgiveness? Will they not recollect the doted innocence of the cradle, how many times their eyes have gazed with proud delight on that, which is now transformed into the object of their aversion and their scorn? Will they not, with frantic readiness acknowledge the thousand pleasures of budding youth? and yet can none of these disarm the parent of his rage, and sweetly work upon the heart to make him spare and love the child? Yes, resentment can hold out no longer! With affectionate grasp he presses to his bosom the lovely penitent, mingles his tears with hers, seals the happy pardon on her quivering lips, and with *godlike* tenderness, bids her *to sin no more.*

Prevention,

Prevention, however, against this painful conflict, against the overthrow of female honour, should in every part of education and habit of life be most religiously consulted.

A total ignorance of the world, may in many instances be equally hurtful to the cause of virtue, as too great a familiarity with it. On the other hand, those of discernment and experience are apt to presume on these protections; but the fever is caught before it is felt, and poison may be received into the stomach, before the patient is aware that he has swallowed it. Chastity runs sufficient hazards without unnecessarily rushing forth into temptation, or playing with traps that are purposely set to ensnare virtue.

Among the many incentives to seduction, that of Novel reading most assuredly ranks as one; not but flowers may sometimes be selected;

selected; but weeds, pernicious fatal weeds, too often overrun the garden; the fruit, deleterious as is the greater part, disguises itself in the exuberance of leaves: the main drift of such writing is to interest, to agitate, and to convulse the passions, and is but too prone, by a sympathy of sentiment to lead the mind astray; if such reading does not disgust and tire by its usual bombast and inanity, it effects on the juvenile reader, what the hot-bed does to the tender plant; and gives a dangerous precosity of sentiment: the notes once taught, a desire to play on the instrument will naturally succeed.

The very mummery of tale, which *swindled* tears from the eyes, and transport from the heart, which gave sensations it could not relieve, has left a train of gunpowder in the mind, and, in such a manner, that one chance spark of fire might be sufficient to blow up reputation, and make a bankrupt of virtue.

An elegant writer* thus expresses himself on the subject:—"We consider the general run of Novels as utterly unfit for you. Instruction they convey none: they paint scenes of pleasure and passion altogether improper for you to behold, even with the mind's eye: their descriptions are often loose and luscious in a high degree: their representations of love between the sexes are almost universally overstrained: all is dotage, or despair; or else ranting swelled into burlesque. In short, the majority of their lovers are either mere lunatics, or mock-heroes."

Against compositions, which are thus highly seasoned for the pruriency of appetite, some restriction should be made; and without abridging the liberty of the press might be attempted. A suitable taxation on these writings might operate as a very salutary check to their daily inundations; the interests

* *Vide* Fordyce's Sermons to Young Women.

terests of virtue would hence be better secured, while publications of *utility* would have a fairer chance of circulation, and to the revenue of the country it might be made a source of advantage.

The lubricity of conversation, and the dalliances of married people, in the presence of the young, the beautiful, and the susceptible, have likewise their evil tendencies: so dangerous did the wisest and greatest Romans consider this, that *Manilius* was struck from the list of Senators, for daring to salute his wife in the presence of daughters; they imagined, that even a kiss might lead the mind into an association of improper thoughts.

To the eye of fastidious delicacy much offence has been given, by the loose and thin apparel of our modern fair: but this pen shall not join in the common censure. It is natural and it is also commendable in

women by every virtuous endeavour to win the admiration of men; a pleasing style of dress much contributes to it; and when that does not oppose the sanction of custom, they are entitled to our thanks: and even in those instances where the modesty of nature may seem to be overleaped; by exciting disgust, the poison that might be designed, is accompanied with its peculiar antidote.

Except only that *unnatural distortion* of hair, which *once* so becomingly adorned the head in *easy flow*; the present mode of female attire is not more elegant in appearance, than friendly to health; and in every respect far more captivating than the wadding and buckram garments, which once were suffered to envelop the fairest work of creation!

"Chastity," says Rousseau, "is a delicious virtue to a handsome woman who has an elevated

elevated soul. While she sees all the world at her feet, she triumphs over all and over herself: she erects in her own heart a throne, at the foot of which every thing pays her homage. The self denials are transient, but their reward is lasting. Purity is maintained by itself, the desires, always curbed, are accustomed to spring up no more; and temptations are multiplied only by the custom of giving way to them. Nothing is despicable that tends to preserve purity; and little precautions preserve great virtues."

If such were the resolutions of all lovely women, they would gain a double conquest! their *persons* which had gained the first, would be guarded from assault by the *principles* which had obtained the second: then indeed would men approach, with conscious reverence, those brilliant suns; not to partake of illicit warmth, but to indulge in sentiments of chastest admiration.

Obscene

Obscene books and prints generate and inflame, in no small degree, impure desires; and to guard against other causes of seduction, it should be the serious attention of those who preside over the seminaries of female education, that not only the lessons, but the strictest examples of chastity be enforced: for this purpose, the conduct of teachers should be seasonably noticed, and the accustomed *familiarity* of servants with the pupils, ought strictly to be prohibited.

Another cause of seduction must be imputed to the few employments that are reserved for women; and it is much to be lamented, that there is not a more extensive choice for them; but when we see that even these very few are invaded by men; reproach cannot so sharply be levelled against the victims of seduction.

So

So great a nursery for vice is idleness, that *Solon*, the wise *Athenian* Legislator, made a law against it. The Egyptians require every person to be of some business. Among the Turks, (the Grand Signior himself not excepted), every man must have a trade. It is a maxim among the Jews, "He who teaches not his son a trade, teaches him to be a thief:" hence likewise the truth of the proverb, which says, "That the Devil tempteth every one, but an idle person tempts the Devil:" in the opinion of that eminent Judge, Sir Matthew Hale, "The prevention of poverty, idleness, and a loose and disorderly education, even of poor children, would do more good to this kingdom than all the gibbets, whipping posts, and gaols in it, and would render such sort of discipline less necessary and less frequent."

To exclude women therefore from various departments of industry and trade, for which they

they may be equally qualified as men, and in many respects better, is not only unjust and impolitic, but by thus exposing so many to idleness and want, it grievously swells the catalogue of seduction.

But let not the seducer hence presume to apologize for his depravity, and still less to exult and triumph in his conquest: while every compassionate eye surveys with acutest grief the wreck of virtue, accusation flies on indignant wings to him, who perpetrated the ignoble act, and pours on his guilty head the vengeance of her fury!

When despoiled of her honour by the base arts of a perjured suitor, blame not woman too severely for the *dismal* consequences which sometimes attend it: by man she was betrayed, and therefore, on man she plots revenge; or as *Millwood*, in her defence to *Thorowgood*, for her perfidious conduct to

Barnwell,

Barnwell, with all the energy of truth, thus expresses herself:

"Women by whom you are the source of joy,
"With cruel arts you labour to destroy:
"A thousand ways our ruin you pursue,
"Yet blame in us those arts first taught by you.
"Oh! may from hence each violated maid,
"By flattering, faithless man betray'd,
"When robb'd of innocence and virgin fame,
"From your destruction raise a nobler name,
"To right their sex's wrongs devote their mind,
"And future *Millwoods* prove to plague mankind."*

Among the Athenians it was enacted by *Solon*, that the man who ravished a free woman, was fined a hundred drachms; he who only enticed her, twenty drachms, or, as some mention, two hundred; for it was considered a greater injury to corrupt a woman's mind than her body; but the man who forced a free virgin was to pay a thousand drachms; and whoever deflowered one was obliged to marry her. Nearly the same good discipline did the Jewish laws enforce: the man who decoyed and seduced a virgin with them, was

* George Barnwell, Act iv.

obliged to pay the father fifty shekels of silver; for so sacred and so honourable was chastity considered among the Jews, that if a man married a woman who had not the proofs of *innocence*, on complaint of the husband to the father, the damsel was brought to the door of her father's house, and the men of the city were allowed to stone her to death; but if a man by *absolute violence* had seduced a damsel, she was exonerated from the imputation of guilt, and the man, in such a case, was punished with death. Adultery, which is a species of more criminal seduction, was considered by them so grievous a sin, that they punished both the man and the woman with death; for each of them was brought out* to the gate of the city for that purpose, *and stoned with stones.*

Adultery, except only that kind, which was frequent in some parts of *Greece*, was considered as a most flagitious crime.

Lycurgus,

* Deuteronomy, chap. xxii.

Lycurgus, the *Spartan* law-giver, tells us, that the best expedient against jealousy, was to allow men the mutual freedom of each others' wives: this he made a very commendable piece of liberality; laughing at those who thought the violation of their beds such an insupportable affront, as to revenge it by murders and cruel wars.

One of the *Athenian* punishments for this crime, was to put out the eyes of the adulterers, depriving them thereby of those organs which first admitted the incentives of lust: they were likewise exposed to other severe and dreadful punishments.

Oh *Seduction!* what hast thou done! thou hast barbarously severed the daughter from the parent, and the parent from the daughter; thou hast separated friends, and made desolation in families; thou hast committed duels, suicides, and murders: thou hast filled the

streets with pitiable wretches, instructed gamblers, emboldened highwaymen, and directed the forger's pen: thou hast crowded gaols, and furnished gibbets! if punishment, therefore, as it ought to be, was proportioned to the offence, how striking, how effective should be that of the *Seducer!*

The chastity of woman is her *all!* if by insidious arts, a man has injured that, every possible restitution in his power, should strictly be demanded.

In the Diocess of the Isle of Mann, there is a law by which, if a single woman prosecutes a single man for a rape, the Ecclesiastical Judges empannel a jury; and if they find him guilty, he is so returned to the temporal courts, where, if that guilt be confirmed, the deemster delivers to the woman a rope, a sword, and a ring; and she has it in her choice to have him hanged, or beheaded,

ed, or to marry him.* In other ecclesiatical jurisdictions of England, the culprit is not placed in such dismal jeopardy.

The common laws of our country are however justly severe against all those, who in the accomplishment of seduction resort to *foul* measures; and in many other cases, award suitable damages; but in ordinary seductions, the ruined maid is too frequently left to bewail her own credulity and execrate the memory of her base delinquent: instead of applying the sword, the rope, or the ring, at the option of the *injured*, it is left to the choice of the *injurer*, in case of bastardy, whether he will give security to provide for the child, go to gaol, or prevail on the woman to marry him.

Those, who are accustomed to officiate at the altar, cannot but painfully regret, that they

* *Vide* The life of Dr. Wilson, Lord Bishop of Sodor and Mann, by *Cruttwell*, vol. 1.—also, Feltham's Tour through the Island of Mann.

they are *required* to read the *pure and solemn marriage service* on so many *disorderly* and *forced* occasions, of what are known by the name of "*Parish Weddings:*" their short but true history is this:—

A woman, who, by *appearances*, is likely to become chargeable to the parish, is called upon to *swear* to the father: it may be, that aware of this matter, he has absconded; a warrant is issued out against him, and he is apprehended; if the culprit cannot give security, or indemnify the demands of the parish, nor consents to marry the woman, to gaol he must go! if afterward he becomes pliable in confinement, he must remain there till a license is procured; then the dismal wretch, reeking from his prison and the fumes of drink, under the vigilant eye of an overseer, or the constable, is safely guarded with his *teeming partner* to the sacred altar, and for what? for the purpose of holy matrimony? rather let it be said, what in reality

is

is the fact, that it is done with the express design of ridding one parish from a probability of *charge*, and throwing it elsewhere!

If such kind of *disreputable* marriages, rather of civil obligation than of voluntary act, were permitted to be ratified by some *other* legal contract, the intention of them would be equally answered, and what is of greater consideration, the pure and awful service of the church, so differently intended, would be rescued from that gross pollution and barefaced ridicule, to which, at present, it is so notoriously exposed.

Such a distinction of ceremony in *solemnizing* honourable propensities, and in *merely legalizing* those that were otherwise, might moreover have a salutary tendency to dispose those that were *concerned*, to resort to church, before *appearances* hindered them from receiving in it, the *more honourable badge* of matrimony;

mony; but which yet exposed them to the coercions of another form of engagement.

Those of suitable condition in life, who refused to atone by wedlock, as much as possible, for the crime of seduction, ought, beyond the parochial demands, to pay a fine to the state, for the injury which its public morals had sustained.

Imperfect as may be these hints, they are thrown out with much humanity and diffidence; with a view of preventing the increase of illegitimate children, who are very undeservedly the objects either of scoff or neglect, and too frequently of both. These suggestions however, are principally intended to check the licentious growth of *Female Seduction!*

ESSAY IV.

PRIDE.

IN all animals that are capable of giving tokens of pride, the advances of it may be seen, nearly in regular progression, according to their utility and comeliness in the work of creation. Man, who is the most excellent of all, has consequently the greatest share: not that he is proud as a *species*, but only as an *individual*; he does not gratify himself in this passion, by making a comparison of his superiority with other orders of animals, but only as it applies to his fellow creatures.

Pride, which has its origin from inordinate self-esteem, betrays itself on different occasions, with endless variety of shape: if it be considered as the antagonist of *meanness* and the exciting cause of generous and heroic deeds; it is not the business of the moralist, when the effects of that passion are salutary to the interests of mankind, to examine with severity the principles which produced them: it is only when pride is not duly balanced by other affections, and so becomes the engine of oppression and injustice; it is the *abuse* of pride which calls for the scourge of reproof; then indeed it becomes a most formidable vice, and of such a peculiar nature, that those who feel it strongest in themselves are the most intolerant of it in others.

So much did this sort of pride reign among the first Philosophers, that they could easily discern it in each other, but would not acknowledge the existence of it in themselves; hence *Diogenes* said, "I tread upon *Plato's* vain

vain study:" to whom *Plato* replied, "O *Diogenes*, how much pride dost thou discover in seeming not to be proud!"

Another Philosopher seeing the vessel wherein *Plato's* vomit lay, said, "I see *Plato's* choler, but I don't see his pride;" intimating thereby, that *Plato's* pride was too deeply rooted to be brought up. Envy, hatred, and malice, fight in her behalf; and by an effect which clearly proves her sway, she persuadeth even the mildest of all passions to be subservient to her worst designs; and so absolute in authority, that she has turned love into hatred, and pity into fury.

Avaricious men have been so much convulsed by pride, that they have even been prodigal at her shrine. Ambition itself, to please revenge, has trampled upon diadems: pride reigns as well among people that are civilized as among barbarians; and where she has not introduced the musket and the sword,

sword, she has employed the bow and the arrow. Men, women, and children, in every age and nation, have been tormented by this passion, and all the rights of nature have been violated at her solicitations.

Analyze every kind of evil, and however artfully it may be disguised in the compound, yet, pride will be detected as a constituent part. From the proudest genealogy, to the humblest descent, and in every condition of life, none are free from its dominion.

The boast of ancestry which claims so great a share of superiority, alas! what is it? the language of *Marius* to the Romans, when they hesitated to appoint him to the rank of General, merely on account of his extraction, answers that question in the following words:

"I submit to your judgment, Romans," says the incensed *Marius*, "on which side the advantage lies, when a comparison is made

made between Patrician haughtiness, and Plebeian experience. They are pleased to slight my mean birth; I despise their mean characters. Want of birth and fortune is the objection against me: want of personal worth against them.

" But are not all men of the same species? What can make a difference between one man and another, but the endowments of the mind? The glory of ancestors casts a light, indeed, upon their posterity, but it only serves to show what the descendants are: it alike exhibits their degeneracy and their worth: they arrogate to themselves honours on account of the exploits done by their forefathers, whilst they will not allow me the due praise for performing the very same sort of actions in my own person. He has no statues, they cry, of his family! He can trace no venerable line of ancestors! What then? Is it a matter of more praise to disgrace one's illustrious ancestors, than

than to become illustrious by one's own good behaviour? What, if I can show no statues of my family? I can show the standards, the armour, and the trappings which I myself have taken from the vanquished. I can show the scars of those wounds, which I have received by facing the enemies of my country! These are my statues! These are the honours I boast of; not left me by inheritance as their's, but earned by toil, by abstinence, by valour, amidst clouds of dust and seas of blood."

In this resolute and dignified manner did *Marius*, while accusing others of pride, most strongly reveal his own: and this haughtiness of mind was notoriously evinced by subsequent conduct, for during the consular government, Rome never witnessed a more powerful and cruel tyrant.

If the flame of pride blazes with peculiar show in the mansions of wealth and title, be

it

it remembered, that in the tenements of obscurity and indigence, it is not extinguished.

It is said of a poor woman in Spain, that in company with three of her children, she went begging from door to door. Some French merchants offered, from motives of compassion, to take the eldest of her sons into their service: but she refused their kindness with disdain, scorning, as she said, that her family should be disgraced by servitude: for poor as they all then appeared to be, he might live to be one day King of Spain.

Many are the anecdotes both of ancient and modern times which might be related to expose the folly of those more ridiculous branches of pride which feast on the vanity of person, or the ostentation of dress. Even with all the blooming attractions of look and figure, the human frame is a mass of corruption, and liable every moment to be

assaulted

assaulted by diseases which are loathsome to the eye, and offensive to the smell! concerning the pride of clothing, the wise *Solon* told *Crœsus*, who appeared before him in robes of costly magnificence, that peacocks and pheasants were dressed with superior brilliancy.

The splendour of apparel is not however always a criterion of the pride of him, who wears it: the affected contempt and actual negligence of a decent exterior, more frequently points out the character, where that passion has taken *much deeper* root: for to many an arrogant sloven of the present day, may justly be applied the reproof of *Socrates* to *Antisthenes*, "*I see thy vanity through the holes of thy coat.*"

Even of mental accomplishments in the highest perfection, which have the best claim to challenge admiration and swell the heart with pride, those who in reality possess them,

them, are usually the most diffident: for it has been well remarked, that ships which are heaviest laden sail lowest, so a mind richly stored with sound and genuine Philosophy, is the most humble.

The wisest man of antiquity summed up the extent of his knowledge in these pithy words, "I know one thing," says he, which is this, "*I know nothing*;" yet, alas, pride, that parent sin, which was unbecoming man in his best estate, he retains in the worst. There dribbles the idiot, or raves in a mad-house, he, who, once edified by his wisdom, or charmed by his eloquence!—look at him, who once gave out, "that the stars fell before him, that the earth trembled at his presence, and that he was the *scourge of God!*" but *where* look for him? the haughty tongue is condemned to eternal silence. This very man* who had

 expressed

* Attila.

expressed a wish to extend his conquests over the whole world, and often glutted his barbarity by dragging captive kings in his train, is suddenly choked by an effusion of blood, and that on his nuptial day! *pride was not made for man!* reflect on this, and be no longer proud!

ESSAY V.

DUELLING.

THE celebrated Lord Rochester has somewhere remarked, "*That all men would be cowards if they durst:*" whether that observation is founded in truth or error shall not be the subject of present investigation: but as a general argument, we will maintain, that if a man be naturally void of fear, courage is no virtue in him, and if he fears, he is conscious of cowardice.

The most courageous among brutes are not insensible to the impressions of fear:

Natural History will inform us, that the Lion is terrified at the crowing of a cock, and the Elephant itself, is frightened at the grunting of a hog.

Aristotle calls your brave fellows, who seem to fear nothing, not even the artillery of the skies, downright fools. Fear is implanted in our natures, and the bravest are subject to it. There was not a more gallant general than *Aratus*, mentioned by *Plutarch*; yet he never entered upon action without palpitations of heart, and great reluctance: and it is said, that *Gracias* King of *Navarre*, called the *Trembler*, whose bravery is well known, was seized with a violent tremour whenever he was going to give battle; and said once to his squire, who was arming him, and endeavouring to animate him, "*Poor man, you know but little of me. Could my flesh be sensible of the dangers to which my courage will this day*

day expose me, I should be worse off than with a quaking fit."

There can be no virtue in hazarding life, where there is no sense of its value: he only is the courageous man, who feeling the importance of life, as it regards the present and a future state, is not afraid, in a good and honourable cause, to expose himself to the perils of death. The scandalous practice of single combat, or avenging personal affronts by duel, cannot make a virtuous claim to such principles, and therefore has no right to the honourable name of courage: it was unknown to the heroes of Greece and Rome, and takes its origin from times of ignorance and barbarity.

Even among the northern nations which tolerated the use of duels, they urged in apology for them, that the corruption and vice of the nation were beyond the controul of other

assaulted by diseases which are loathsome to the eye, and offensive to the smell! concerning the pride of clothing, the wise *Solon* told *Crœsus*, who appeared before him in robes of costly magnificence, that peacocks and pheasants were dressed with superior brilliancy.

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affronts therefore beneath the notice of those laws, or not within their capacity of discrimination, does the duellist demand the savage recompense of human blood!

. . . . . .

Let the military man, who apologizes, that the situation he holds, is accompanied by the occasional necessity of duelling, reconcile, if he can, as a man of *genuine honour and truth*,* the practice of duelling, with the solemn oath he has taken of allegiance to the King, his *laws*, and *government!* Let all those who hold rank or departments under the crown, make the same application to themselves, and if they pretend to honour, let them take heed to be strictly clear of *perjury!* With the Romans, no man was permitted to pass through the temple of honour, till he had gone through the temple of *virtue!* among the advocates of duelling are

* Vir bonus est quis ?
Qui consulta patrum, qui leges juraque servat.
Oderunt peccare boni virtutis honore.

assaulted by diseases which are loathsome to the eye, and offensive to the smell! concerning the pride of clothing, the wise *Solon* told *Crœsus*, who appeared before him in robes of costly magnificence, that peacocks and pheasants were dressed with superior brilliancy.

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him to Antwerp, where they were both going, which he accordingly did, and then took leave of him. The young fellow was soon told by some arch rogues, whom he happened to fall in with, that he must signalize himself by fighting some man of known courage, or else he would soon be despised in the regiment. The young man said, he knew no one but Colonel Guise, and he had received great obligations from him. It was all one for that, they said, in these cases; the Colonel was the fittest man in the world, as every body knew his bravery. Soon afterward, up comes the young officer to Colonel Guise, as he was walking up and down in the coffee-house, and began in a hesitating manner to tell him how much obliged he had been to him, and how sensible he was of his obligations. "Sir," replied Colonel Guise, "I have done my duty by you, and no more." "But, Colonel," added the young officer faltering, "I am told that I must fight some gentleman of known courage, and who has

killed several persons, and that nobody"— "Oh, Sir," replied the the Colonel, "your friends do me too much honour; but there is a gentleman (pointing to a fierce looking black fellow that was sitting at one of the tables) who has *killed half the regiment.*" So up goes the officer to him, and tells him he is well informed of his bravery, and that for that reason he must fight him. "Who, I, "Sir?" replied the gentleman: "Why, I am *Peal, the Apothecary.*"

If in defence of duelling it be said that the practice operates as a restraint against affronting behaviour and preserves decent order in Society, it should be mentioned at the same time, that well bred men require not such a bugbear, and those of a contrary description are seldom awed by it: for characters of this cast, are naturally most exposed to such rencounters, and by experience, are not only familiarized to them, but acquire at the same time superior skill and dexterity

in

in the execution of them; and hence this consideration denies very materially, what is often urged in favour of duelling, that it is to each, equally a fair mode of attack. The hoary lecher, who has assaulted the character or virtue of a beloved wife or an affectionate daughter is suffered to atone for that enormity, in taking away the life of one, who may be in the bloom of youth, honour, fortune and endearments. Is this honour? is this bravery? is this satisfaction? yes, the world calls it by such names! but tell us, ye seconds, who like executioners attend at the fatal spot to prepare for so foul a spectacle, tell us, by the perturbed feelings of your consciences, what name to give the infernal deed!

"Oh, it is monstrous! monstrous!
"Methought the billows spoke, and told me of it."

Let not the dignified name of *Honour* continue to be perverted in its use, let not

the *basest* metal pass for the purity of gold,—strip from the imposing *Ass* the *Lion's* skin.

"Well, 'tis no matter; says the duellist, Honour pricks me on. Yea, but how if Honour prick me off when I come on? how then? Can Honour set a leg? No. Or an arm? No. Or take away the grief of a wound? No. Honour hath no skill in surgery then? No. What is Honour? A word. What is that word Honour? Air: a trim reckoning!—Who hath it? He that died o' Wednesday. Doth he feel it? No. Doth he hear it? No. Is it insensible then? Yea, to the dead. But will it not live with the living: No. Why? Detraction will not suffer it:—therefore I'll none of it. Honour is a mere 'scutcheon; and so ends my catechism." *

That cannot be the offspring of legitimate honour, which originates with injustice, is nursed by revenge, is perpetrated by stealth, which terminates in cruelty, violates the laws of society, and disdains the resentment of Almighty God!

Rescue the name of Honour from such impious degradation, nor suffer it to gloss over

* Henry IV.

over the sanguinary act, by giving to it the name of valour.

" As if they labour'd
To bring manslaughter into form, set quarrelling
Upon the head of Valour; which, indeed,
Is Valour misbegot, and came into the world
When sects and factions were but newly born:
He's truly valiant, that can wisely suffer
The worst that man can breathe, and make his wrongs
His outsides; to wear them like his raiment carelessly,
And ne'er prefer his injuries to his heart,
To bring it into danger.
If wrongs be evils, and enforce us kill,
What folly 'tis to hazard life for ill!" *

On a subject of such baleful consequences as that of duelling, which leaves the deplorable vestiges of grief beyond the principals themselves; it may be of advantage to the design of this essay, to bring forward the arguments of the celebrated Dr. South, in his small tract " *Of Duelling Considered.*" " He that dies in a duel, says this writer, so falls to the earth, that, it is to be feared, he falls

* Timon of Athens.

falls much lower; and that the iron enters deeper into his soul than into his body, and kills much farther than it reaches. And this introduces the other fatal consequence, which attends the person thus vanquished; and that is,"

" Death eternal. When two persons come into the field upon such an expedition, they defy one another, they defy the laws both of God and man, and they defy hell: their business is, which shall send the other to that place of misery first. For certainly whosoever quits the body with the marks of murder and revenge fresh upon his soul, and passes from his conquering adversary to his dreadful judge, shall in that world be condemned for a murderer, though it was his ill hap to be murdered in this,"

" Nay, there will lie a double charge of murder upon him: namely, for being both the unjust occasion of his own death, and the

the designer of his adversary's: for it is the design that makes the murderer, and not the event and issue of the action, which are wholly contingent and extrinsical to the will. For, shall a man be therefore accounted no murderer, because he had less courage, less skill, or less luck than his opposite? because his purpose was stronger than his arm? or because his misguided rapier hit upon a rib, and kept the fatal point from the regions of life, and so gave the adversary opportunity to be more sure and mischievous in his thrust? All which plea or excuse amounts to no more than this, that he would have slain his adversary with all his heart, but was prevented, and could not."

"I neither will nor dare pronounce any thing in limitation of the extent of God's mercy; but this I shall say, that, according to a standing rule and tenor of God's revealed will, he that dies in a duel undertook upon an unjust cause, affords no ground for any one

one to judge that he is saved: for he dies in his sin, directing his sword to his brother's heart; so that there is nothing but his last breath passing between his murderous intention, and the final giving up of his accounts to God; before whom he has no other cause to allege for his dying in this manner, but that he was proud, passionate, or revengeful; sad qualifications to recommend a man to the tribunal of such a judge!"

"We have seen here the miserable consequences that befal the conquered dueller. Let us now, in the next place, take a survey of those that befal the conqueror; and these are three."

"In case he is apprehended: The law has provided that for him, which he did for his adversary, but in a more ignominious manner. The rope and the gibbet are to be his portion; die he must; and what honour a man wins, or saves, by that which gives him an opportunity

tunity of being hanged, is hard to be understood; but he that mistakes the cart for a triumphal chariot, or the gallows-tree for a triumphal arch, may apply himself to the obtaining such victories as these."

"But, secondly, suppose that he escapes by flight; yet then he quits his country, and lives a banished man, and like *Cain*, having murdered his brother, he presently betakes himself to wander about the world, leaving behind him the confiscation of his goods, a family lamenting, and perhaps starving; and some of them peradventure dying for grief, and so feeling the bad influence of his action, as really, though not in the same manner, as his slain adversary."

"Surely these will be sad accidents to a man in cold blood, when the fury of his passion, which abused his reason, and represented revenge so pleasant, shall be over, and transmit the thing naked to his recovered

judgment, to be considered according to its real aspect and all its sharp events."

"By this time, undoubtedly, he will see how much better it had been for him to have kept himself quiet and innocent in the peaceable enjoyment of his friends, his estate, and country; than to wander as an indigent murderer in a strange land, from whence the sense of his guilt, the severity of the laws, and the exasperation of the murdered person's friends, ready to prosecute those laws against him, continually terrify him from all thoughts of a return."

"But, in the third and last place, we will suppose the man to have better fortune: That he has fought and killed his adversary, and so satisfied his revenge; and moreover, that through the intercession of great friends, willing to share his guilt, and to derive some of the blood upon their own heads, he has not by flight escaped, but by a full acquittment outbraved

outbraved justice, and triumphed over the law, and so stands secure as to all temporal retribution. But still, after all this, may we not ask concerning such an one, is all well within? How fares it with him in the court of conscience? Is he able to keep off the grim arrests of that? Can he drown the cry of blood, and bribe his own thoughts to let him alone? Can he fray off the vulture from his breast, that night and day is gnawing his heart, and wounding it with ghastly and amazing reflections?"

"Whether it is, that God has done it for the defence of mens lives, or whether it is the unnaturalness of the sin, or whatsoever else may be the cause, certain it is, that there is nothing which dogs the conscience so incessantly, fastens upon it so closely, and tears it so furiously, as the dismal sense of blood-guiltiness."

"The man perhaps endeavours to be merry, he goes about his business, he enjoys his cups,

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and his jolly company; and possibly, if he fought for revenge, he is applauded and admired by some; if he fought for a mistress, he is smiled upon for a day. But when, in the midst of all his gaieties, his conscience shall come and round him in the ear: Sir, you are to remember, that you have murdered a man, and what is more, you have murdered a soul; you have sacrificed an immortal nature, the image of God, and the price of Christ's blood, to a pique, a punctilio, to the loves of a pitiful creature, lighter than vanity, and emptier than the air: and these are the worthy causes for which your brother now lies in the regions of darkness and misery, without relief, without recovery; an eternal sacrifice to a short passion, a rash anger, and a sudden revenge."

"Now when these reasonings shall be joined with the considerations of the divine justice, and the retributions that heaven reserves for blood; these sad reckonings, that are in store for

for the successful acquitted murderer: believe it, where these thoughts shall lay hold of the conscience, they will leave their marks behind them."

In the Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent, may be seen this salutary law:—

"Let the abominable custom of Duelling brought in by the invention of the Devil, that by the bloody and cruel death of mens bodies, he might accomplish the destruction of their souls, be quite exterminated and banished out of the Christian World. If any Emperor, Kings, Dukes, Princes, Marquisses, Earls, or other Temporal Lords, by what name soever they be called, shall grant liberty of fighting duels between Christians any where within their Dominions, they shall upon this very account be excommunicated. And they shall be deprived of the jurisdiction and government of the city, castle, or place

place wherein, or at which, they suffered the duel to be fought, if they hold of the church; and if they be copyhold, they shall forthwith escheat to the Lords of the Manor. And the persons that fought, and those that are called their seconds, shall incur the penalty of excommunication, and of forfeiting their goods and chattels, and of perpetual infamy. And they ought to be punished as murderers, according to the holy Canons. And if they die in the combat they shall never have Christian burial. And those who were accessaries to the duel, by advising or abetting it, or shall, by any way whatsoever, persuade any one to it; and the spectators also shall be liable to excommunication and an everlasting curse. Any privilege or evil custom whatsoever, though beyond the memory of man, to the contrary notwithstanding."

It cannot be too seriously lamented, that in those instances, where satisfaction is not

to

to be obtained either for real or imaginary affronts, society have not contrived among themselves some mode of punishment adequate to the nature and extent of the injury, and such, as should be inflicted on the *offender*, and him only. For the protection of property against thieves and swindlers there is wisely instituted a *Guardian Society*; for the preservation of what is so often misnamed *Honor*, against the assaults of turbulent or desperate characters, it would seem, by the apology of the duellist, there is no law, except in the decision of a bullet.

To redress such a defect, if that in truth were the case, why are not tribunals of Honor established in every city, town, and country, where references should be made on all those points, for which challenges are now sent? Those who were adjudged to be defaulters, and refused to comply with the terms of satisfaction decreed by an appeal to them, ought, with a publicity of their names,

names, to be excluded from the society of the honorable and peaceable!

If some such method of redress were to have the sanction and patronage of a few honorable and *truly courageous* characters, the *murderous fashion* of duelling, would quickly yield to *infamy*, the usurped name of *Honor!*

ESSAY VI.

SELF-MURDER.

IF the world had not given so many horrible proofs of this very *unnatural* sin, human reason could hardly be persuaded, that man would inflict so barbarous an outrage against himself.

Life, that precious *loan* from the Almighty Author, is of sacred and immortal principle! it is an emanation of Deity! "*For God created man in his own image, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul!*" Will he not therefore be

dismayed to make a ferocious attack on that which is of divine original? Will he dare, by ruffian violence on his own body, force the spirit from its tenement to appear before Heaven's tribunal reeking with *blood* and *murder?* He will—he is tired of life!

Friends betray and enemies persecute, fear and disgrace, poverty and despair, calamities of every description so distract and torture him, that under this intolerable weight of complicated misery, imagine him to say, that he can bear up no longer, and therefore, welcomes death as his friend and deliverer; or else, with an arrogant contempt of life, he refuses to hold it, subject to those casualities, which are inseparable from mortality; and will go on even to applaud the act of *self-murder*, and call it a Roman virtue! but though a *heathen* gloss is borrowed to varnish over so foul an act, yet *pride*, *cowardice* and *infidelity*, will be found in almost every instance of suicide, to have been the real causes.

That

That examples of suicide are to be produced from the un-christian world, we readily admit; and in cases of *extremity*, self-murder was considered by them as necessary and laudable; hence it was, that *Demosthenes* and *Hannibal* are said to have been constantly provided with an effectual poison to dispatch themselves, rather than they would fall into the hands of their enemies.

The Stoick Philosophers, who considered all things to lie under an irresistible necessity; and the Epicureans, who expected no future state, consistently with such principles, abandoned themselves to these fatal courses.

Poets and orators never seem more eloquent, than when they describe the death of *Cato*, who, not able to endure *Cæsar's* government, though he had born with *Pompey's*, " plunged a dagger into his breast, tore his own entrails, and that he might taste death, rent his soul from his body, and

that with his own hands." The moral *Seneca** never spake in higher praise of virtue than he did of this action; he imagined that all the Gods descended into Utica to consider this spectacle.

Plato himself, when he commands those only to be interred in lonesome solitary places, and without the usual solemnities, who, through *cowardice* and unmanly *fear*, butchered themselves, evidently implies some palliation and excuse for those who killed themselves on very urgent and honorable occasions: but the unlimited practice of suicide was considered, even by the *heathen*, as opprobrious, and those who were guilty of it, except in *very extraordinary instances*, forfeited their rights to decent burial, and were clandestinely put into the ground, for

* Liquet mihi cum magno spectasse gaudio Deos, cum vir ille acerrimus sui vindex gladium sacro pectori infigit, dum viscera spargit & animam manu educit.

Sen. De. Provid. c. ii.

they

they were considered as enemies to their country whose service they deserted; for which reason *Ajax*, the son of *Telamon*, was not according to custom reduced to ashes, for it was declared to be a profanation of that element to consume in it the bodies of such, as had been their own murderers.

Such then is a brief statement of ancient opinion on the present subject, and so far were they from encouraging self-murder, that they resented it as cowardly and unmanly!

To prove that this vice has no claim to courage, but partakes on the contrary of cowardice as well as pride, it will be sufficient to remark, that courage is a virtue which supports the mind under a sense of danger, and gives her fortitude to meet it; for want therefore of a manly resolution to combat against the adversities of life, it happens, that men, by suicides, make a mean surrender

of

of their own existence; and afraid of their enemies, of confronting their accusers, or outliving their disgrace, by sneaking out of the world, they imagine that they evade such troubles, but these are the impressions of cowardice.

To haughty ambitious pride, which cannot brook disappointment, must be therefore added, this impulse of fear.

That the self-murderer proves himself to be highly charged with infidelity, is sufficiently evinced, by the effrontery of the act.

Before the deliberate suicide can effect the dreadful deed, either a disbelief in the Providence of God in the affairs of the moral world, a contempt of his scriptures, an awful temerity of running the hazard of the die, or a daring presumption of divine pardon, must have strongly influenced the mind.

The

The fear of death is implanted in us, by the author of nature, with the wise design of exciting a proper solicitude for the preservation of life: even subordinate animals, influenced by sensations of this kind, and without impressions of religion, by carefully avoiding whatever endangers their safety or destruction, strongly declare their aversion to death, and a due estimation of life.

On great and laudable occasions, it may be an act of valour to surmount the fear of death, and boldly meet it; but where life is rendered more terrible than death, it then becomes the truest valour to live: but the conduct of the suicide proves that he has not courage so to resolve: overawed by the troubles of the moment, which he has not spirit to resist, nor firmness to endure, the desperate experiment of relief is made, and he forces on himself a violent death!

He, who thus becomes his own executioner, independently of committing so cruel an

an act against his own nature, must have doubts concerning the veracity of Scripture and of God's government in the moral world; or to speak gently of this atrocious deed; for the sake of avoiding pains, which are but temporal, he will take his chance of those which are eternal; or, on a bold presumption of receiving that mercy, which the sacred oracles of truth have every where discouraged him to expect, he will dare to rush, without the appointed summons, into the presence of an Almighty Judge!

" To be, or not to be; that is the queſtion;
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to ſuffer
The ſlings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms againſt a ſea of troubles,
And, by oppoſing, end them? To die—to ſleep—
No more;—And by a ſleep to ſay we end
The heart-ach, and the thouſand natural ſhocks
That fleſh is heir to—'tis a conſummation
Devoutly to be wiſh'd. To die; to ſleep—
To ſleep! perchance to dream: aye, there's the rub!
For in that ſleep of death, what dreams may come,
When we have ſhuffled off this mortal coil,

Must

Must give us pause. There's the respect,
That makes calamity of so long life:
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
Th' oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? who would fardels bear,
To groan and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death
(That undiscovered country, from whose bourn
No traveller returns) puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of?"

Sufficient of itself is the reasoning of this profound bard to arrest the thought, and disarm the hand of those, who are plotting, when, and which way to deprive themselves of existence, voluntarily to punish with death, the turbulence of their own feelings—to become their own assassins! The commission of such a crime, we know, is an act of madness; it ought, however, to be remembered, that *all* are not *mad* who are guilty of it; but

on this matter, it is the province of jurors to determine; they are to give the verdict; and for such an outrage against the decencies of society, may order the ghastly corps to rot with infamy!

But spare the dismal inquisition, thou who art sometimes conscious of having indulged the dreadful thought of tearing asunder the silver cords of life; spare the agonizing consequences of such a deed to those, who dearly love thee! save thy memory from a charge so vile! rebuke the infernal spirit, which whispers suicide to thy relief—suffer not the provoking enemy to take advantage of thy distracted brain: let him not cheat thee out of the precious boon of life; nor decoy, by any artifice, the living principle from the frame to which it is now attached, lest that deceptious monitor should revile thee afterward in the regions of unutterable darkness! Forbear! oh forbear! the base design of suicide, and instantly fly the deadly instrument!

On

On bended knees to Heaven, implore protection from the God of strength, thou, who art now assaulted with temptation! Open *that book*, which never failed to administer the sweetest consolation in every instance of human misery, and to *all*, without exception, save only the *self determined* reprobate!

Address then that compassionate Father, who resides in Heaven, but still watches the things which are done on earth, to succour and forgive thee! An invisible hand will presently dispel the cloud, and some good thing will happen to thee! Live, therefore, and enjoy it—live! and do good to others!

ESSAY VII.

LYING.

THERE is scarcely to be found among the various descriptions of mankind, an individual, who, with the errors of his character, will allow it to be tainted with the name of LIAR! for in that vice there is something so peculiarly odious and mean, that the mere charge is no sooner made, than it is resisted with violence! Happy would it be for society, if the practice of this crime was as resolutely abhorred.

In *truth*, there is something so truly amiable, that, through her candour and openness, she

she seldom fails to atone for her severity, by securing to her votaries admiration and respect, and by moderating resentment which, otherwise had been aggravated.

Mutual confidence is no less the security than it is the happiness of social intercourse; but falsehood lurks in ambush, to impair the one, and destroy the other; like the assassins of Cæsar, who prostrated themselves at his feet, that they might stab him with greater certainty, so does falsehood artfully put on the lovely dress of truth, the better to disguise its base design.

However successful to immediate purposes, lying may appear to be, yet in some most unexpected way or other, this paltry refuge is usually detected and as constantly exposed:

" Of all the vices, (says the celebrated Lord Chesterfield) there is not one more criminal, more mean, and more ridiculous than lying.

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The end we design by it is very seldom accomplished, for lies are always found out at one time or other; and yet there are persons who give way to this vice, who are otherwise of good principles, and have not been ill educated.

" Lies generally proceed from vanity, cowardice, and a revengeful disposition, and sometimes from a mistaken notion of self-defence.

" He who tells a malicious lie, with a view of injuring the person he speaks of, may gratify his wish for a while, but will, in the end, find it recoil upon himself; for, as soon as he is detected, (and detected he most certainly will be), he is despised for the infamous attempt; and whatever he may say hereafter of that person, will be considered as false, whether it be so or not.

" If a man lies, shuffles, or equivocates, for in fact they are all alike, by way of excuse for

for any thing he has said or done, he aggravates the offence rather than lessens it; for the person to whom the lie is told has a right to know the truth, or there would have been no occasion to have framed a falsehood. This person, of course, will think himself ill treated for being a second time affronted; for what can be a greater affront than an attempt to impose upon any man's understanding? Besides, lying, in excuse for a fault, betrays fear, than which, nothing is more dastardly and unbecoming the character of a gentleman.

"There is nothing more manly, or more noble, if we have done wrong, than frankly to own it. It is the only way of meeting forgiveness. Indeed, confessing a fault and asking pardon, with great minds, is considered as a sufficient atonement. 'I have been betrayed into an error,' or 'I have injured you, Sir, and am heartily ashamed of it, and sorry for it,' has frequently disarmed the person

son injured, and, where he would have been our enemy, has made him our friend.

"There are persons also, whose *vanity* leads them to tell a thousand lies. They persuade themselves, that, if it be no way injurious to others, it is harmless and innocent, and they shelter their falsehoods under the softer name of *untruths*. These persons are foolish enough to imagine, that if they can recite any thing wonderful they draw the attention of the company; and if they themselves are the object of that wonder, they are looked up to as persons extraordinary. This has made many a man see things that never were in being, hear things that never were said, and achieve feats that never were attempted, dealing always in the marvellous. Such may be assured, however unwilling the persons they are conversing with may be to laugh in their faces, that they hold them secretly in the highest contempt; for he who will tell a lie thus idly, will not scruple to tell a greater, where

where his interest is concerned. Rather than any person should doubt of my veracity for one minute, I would deprive myself of telling abroad either what I had really seen or heard, if such things did not carry with them the face of probability.

"Others again will boast of the great respect they meet with in certain companies; of the honours that are continually heaped on them there; of the great price they give for every thing they purchase; and this to be thought of consequence; but, unless such people have the best and most accurate memory, they will, perhaps, very soon after, contradict their former assertions, and subject themselves to contempt and derision.

"Remember then, as long as you live, that nothing but strict truth can carry you thro' life with honour and credit. Liars are not only disagreeable, but dangerous companions, and, when known, will ever be shunned by

men of understanding. Besides, as the greatest liars are generally the greatest fools, a man who addicts himself to this detestable vice, will not only be looked upon as vulgar, but will never be considered as a man of sense!"

But though it be thus dishonorable to publish lies, yet on the other hand, unless it becomes a legal duty, or to answer the purpose of public or private good, we are not required to reveal the truth itself to the injury of another; and even a diversion from the exact letter of it, when directed to some benevolent purpose, the most rigid moralist would not censure.

Whatever is intended to *deceive*, whether expressed by *looks*, *words*, or *actions*, comes within the meaning and *design* of falsehood; mental reserves and equivocation, or a partial suppression of the truth, where duty and honor

honor demand a fair statement of the *whole*, are justly considered as a *species of lies*.

For the asseverations of lovers, the poets tell us, that Jupiter made a bottomless bag: words indeed, on such turbulent occasions, are usually regarded to be as good as oaths, and both of them to be as trifles! But the sacred interests of truth will not allow of such impious frivolousness!*

"Let thy oaths," says a writer, "be sacred, and promises be made upon the altar of thy heart. Call not Jove to witness, with a stone in one hand, and a straw in another; and so make chaff and stubble of thy vows. Wordly spirits, whose interest is their belief, make cobwebs of obligations; and, if they can find ways to elude the urn of the Prætor, will trust the thunderbolt of Jupiter: and, therefore, if they should as deeply swear as Osman to

* *Vide* Puffendorff on the Nature of Promises and Oaths.

Bethlem Gabor; yet whether they would be bound by those chains, and not find ways to cut such Gordian knots, we could have no just assurance. But honest mens' words are Stygian oaths, and promises inviolable. These are not the men for whom the fetters of law were first forged; they needed not the solemness of oaths; by keeping their faith they swear, and evacuate such confirmations."

Although we have admitted, that for the purpose of *beneficial* designs, fiction itself, under the semblance of reality, is sometimes allowable; yet against the abuse of such a licence, it must be strictly guarded: for by giving to fabricated tales too strongly the language and colouring of truth, we may exceed the limits of this indulgence, and here it may be remarked, that the applause usually given to those who are called "Good story tellers," has a tendency to draw them aside from the plain habits of truth; neither is an impeachment of *their* credibility

so severely instituted, if now and then, on other occasions, they glide into narrative, partaking of marvellous description, *such* characters plead a sort of indemnification, and by the consent of society are privileged, " to tell lies with a better grace than other men."

The practice therefore of telling entertaining falsehoods, for the sake of their contagious evils, and lest they should involve the real anecdotes of life with uncertainty and suspicion, should only be tolerated under the most prudent management.

However, after all, discreditable and malignant lies are readily to be distinguished from those to which we have now alluded.

To the honor of heathen virtue it is recorded of Epaminondas, that he could not be prevailed on to digress from truth; and of Xenocrates it is said, that the people entertained so high an opinion of his veracity, that

that when he once approached the altar to confirm by oath what he had asserted, the Judges unanimously declared that his word was sufficient.

"Truth," says a venerable writer, "is the beginning of heroical virtue, 'tis the most lively resemblance and imitation of *Him* who is absolutely perfect, 'tis the bond and cement of society, a virtue composed of amiableness and divine features; but a lie is unreasonable, and ugly as the shadows of night."

ESSAY VIII.

DETRACTION.

FEW, but those of the weakest heads, or most depraved taste, can derive satisfaction in wantonly publishing the misconduct of others, or imputing to any action a bad motive, where a good one may as fairly be assigned.

It is not sufficient to say in justification of this offence, that only the truth was spoken, for if even it were so, (and that with slanderers is seldom the case,) yet, if truth itself be officiously intruded to the injury of another,

another, it partakes of detraction. In palliation of the crime, the defamer perhaps will say, that he is not the author of the tale, but he is nevertheless guilty of encouraging the circulation of it; the *receiver* of stolen goods is properly made as obnoxious to the law as the *thief* himself; and the busy promoter and even the patient hearer of detraction are alike the abettors of it.

The great law of charity and justice demands of us not only to avoid an injurious act to our neighbour, but moreover requires us to suffer no harm to be done to him, which may be in our power to prevent. Those who are addicted to this vile practice of the tongue, conscious of the odiousness justly attached to the abrupt introduction of slander, usually smooth the way to reproach, by some previous commendation, and to give their designs better effect, not unfrequently appear to build up, in some few instances, the very character which

which these vultures have pounced upon to mangle afterward.

By preparatory declarations of regard to the family, or esteem for the talents and many good qualities of the person, against whom, they have a poniard concealed in the bosom, and the *poison of asps is under their lips*, they better disguise the intentions: proceeding by an artful climax of insinuation to positive assertion, like a terse epigram, they twist about the dragon tail, till opportunity serves, of darting in, at a certain point, the corroding sting: "*they can smile and murder while they smile.*"

"Slander, in whatever manner it is ushered in," says an elegant writer, "is a vice impure in its source, dangerous in its effects, general in its influence, irreparable in its consequences: a vice that strikes at once three mortal blows; it wounds him who commits it; him against whom it is committed; and

him who sees it committed; and is tolerated in society only because every one has an invincible inclination to commit it."

It is therefore the bounden duty of all societies, whether of private or public description, who are not the patrons of tale bearing, firmly to express, in the very first attempt of introducing it, their aversion to such mischievous loquacity: for the defamer, whoever it may be, offers no small affront to the company to whom the information is communicated in supposing that slander is as welcome entertainment to them, as it is to the haberdasher of it: the restless tongue of calumny knows no bounds, nor spares any character, age, or sex: like the spokes of a wheel in rotatory motion, it whirls about all in their turn, and when some are up, others are sure to be down: characters of publicity however are usually the more certain mark of illiberal attack: only those escape, but not always, who from obscurity of situation or insignificance

[illegible] of life, have not sufficiently interested [illegible] the genius of slander.

"The failings of good men," it has been well observed, "are commonly more published in the world, than their good deeds; and one fault of a deserving man shall meet with more reproaches, than all his virtues, praise; such is the force of ill will and ill nature; and it often happens that those are the best people, whose characters have been most injured by slanderers; for we usually find that to be the sweetest fruit, which the birds have been picking at." In this view of the subject, he that is loudly praised cannot expect otherwise, than to be loudly censured, and thus his character in the mouth of defamation, like the brilliancy of a diamond, may be better displayed through the intervention of some dark body.

Even against an open enemy, the generous spirit disdains to offer malignant language.

To

To the Persian soldier who reviled Alexander the Great, excellent was this rebuke of his commander, "*Sir, you are paid to fight against Alexander and not to rail at him.*"

The author of Tom Jones has justly told us, "that vice has not a more abject slave; society produces not a more odious vermin, nor can the devil receive a gift more worthy of him, nor possibly more welcome to him, than a *slanderer.*"

"'Tis slander,
Whose edge is sharper than the sword; whose tongue
Outvenoms all the worms of *Nile*; whose breath
Rides on the posting winds, and doth belye
All corners of the world; kings, queens, and states,
Maids, matrons—nay, the secrets of the grave,
This viperous slander enters." *Cymbeline*, A. 3. Sc. 4.

ESSAY IX.

AVARICE.

THOUGH all rivers flow into the sea, yet that depository will not be full, and though the influx of wealth be unbounded, the coffers of avarice remain insatiable: age, which usually corrects other vices, strangely increases this.

Avarice stands directly opposed to extravagance, and of the two evils, there scarcely can be a doubt, that avarice is by far the greater: if the prodigal, by squandering on himself, puts it out of his power to be generous

rous to others, and sometimes even honest; the niggard, while possessing the most ample means of doing both, wants the spirit to indulge in the former, and too frequently trespasses against the latter.

A moralist of antiquity calls him a thief who covets, though he never steals; if this assertion be true, the avaricious are by imagination and wish, with their hands in the pockets of others, and if the act could be as secret as the thought, or the effort as practicable as the desire, would be plundering cities and swallowing empires!

Such is the dominion of avarice, which seldom permits her slaves to be restrained by any noble principle, that by analogy it is reasonably to be feared, every such ignoble sacrifice would be made at her altar.

"For sordid lucre plunge we in the mire;
Drudge, sweat, through every shame for every gain?
For vile contaminating trash throw up our
Hope in Heaven, our dignity with man,
And deify the dirt matured to gold!" YOUNG.

It has been amply remarked by a father of the Christian Church, "That though Joshua could stop the course of the Sun, yet all his power could not stop the course of avarice. The sun stood still, but avarice went on. Joshua obtained a victory when the sun stood still; but, when avarice was at work, Joshua was defeated."

Avarice it was, mark the truth ye who are tormented with this dangerous passion! that changed a beloved friend into the odious traitor!"*

With the design of reclaiming a miser, Constantine the Great had recourse to the following experiment: "He took a lance, and marked out a space of ground of the size of a human body, and said to him, add heap to heap, accumulate riches upon riches, extend the bounds of your possessions, conquer

* Judas.

conquer the whole world, in a few days such a spot as this will be all you will have."

With all the rigid calculations of compound interest from their massy bags, the miserable victims of avarice forget, that every hour they are *lavishing* away the *principle* of life, and for the short time they are creeping about the earth, like Tantalus of old, are starving in the midst of plenty! To himself the miser has not the courage to be liberal, and against the solicitations of charity to others, he is hard as the flinty rock; and hence the charge of inhumanity is justly added to the long catalogue of his other crimes—Ah miserable man! death will shortly tear from thy hard grasp thy lands, thy buildings, and thy funded thousands, and to set a mockery on these thy idols, will put them into the hands of some determined spendthrift, who is impatient to pay the charge of thy obsequies, that he may riot in thy ill-gotten wealth, and thus

thy

thy money will a second time become a reproach, though in contrary extremes.

If avarice be thy disposition, make it not thus thy punishment and disgrace: take resolution to break the detestable manacles, open thy stores, and taste the luxury of doing good!

On a very notorious character; that accomplished writer Dr. Arbuthnot, thus strongly expresses himself on such features of it, as allude to *avarice*. The epitaph, which well deserves a place in this Essay, runs thus :*—

" HERE continueth to rot
The body of FRANCIS CHARTERIS;
Who, with an INFLEXIBLE CONSTANCY,
And INIMITABLE UNIFORMITY OF LIFE,
Persisted,
In spite of AGE and INFIRMITIES,
In the practice of EVERY HUMAN VICE;
Excepting PRODIGALITY and HYPOCRISY;
His insatiable AVARICE exempted him from the first,
His matchless impudence from the second.
Nor was he more singular
In the undeviating pravity of his manners,
Than successful

* *Vide*, Caldwall's select Collection of Ancient and Modern Epitaphs.

In accumulating WEALTH;
For without TRADE or PROFESSION,
Without trust of PUBLIC MONEY,
And without BRIBE-WORTHY service,
He acquired, or, more properly, created,
A MINISTERIAL ESTATE.
He was the only person of his time,
Who could CHEAT without the mask of HONESTY,
Retain his primeval MEANNESS
When possessed of TEN THOUSAND a year;
And having deserved the GIBBET for what he did,
Was at last condemned to it for what he could not do.
O indignant reader!
Think not his life useless to mankind!
PROVIDENCE, at his execrable designs,
To give to after ages
A conspicuous PROOF and EXAMPLE
Of how small estimation is EXORBITANT WEALTH
In the sight of GOD,
By his bestowing it on the most UNWORTHY
OF ALL MORTALS."

"This man was infamous for all manner of vices. While he was an ensign in the army, he was drummed out of the regiment for a cheat; he was next banished Brussels, and drummed ou of Ghent on the same account. After an hundred tricks at the gaming tables, he took to lending of money at exorbitant interest and great premium, and accumulating premium, interest and capital into new capital, and seizing to a minute when the payments

payments became due. In a word, by a constant attendance on the wants, vices, and follies of mankind, he acquired an immense fortune. His house was a perpetual bawdy-house. He was twice condemned for rapes, and pardoned; but the last time not without imprisonment in Newgate and large confiscations.

"He died in 1731, aged 62. The populace at his funeral raised a great riot, almost tore the body out of the coffin, and cast dead dogs, &c. into the grave along with it. He was said to be worth seven thousand pounds a year, estates in land, and about one hundred thousand pounds in money."

This specimen of character is however only introduced, as an extraordinary instance of miserly wickedness: but the whole turpitude of this man's conduct is not necessarily connected with propensities to avarice; and the exceptions to it, are many.

Among the learned sages of antiquity, an eager pursuit after wealth was held in a ridiculous point of view, and censured as absolutely injurious to the cause of virtue. When Archelaus invited Socrates to his court for the purpose of conferring on him reward and honours, that brave philosopher is said to have made answer to those who brought the message, in these words: "Tell the king that a measure of flour may be bought in Athens for a halfpenny, and water for nothing, and though your master does suppose I want, yet I have enough, because I am contented with a little."

To the plagues of *inquietude* the miser cannot be a stranger: for the accumulation and safety of his wealth, the poor man's brain must be perpetually on the rack; but intolerable is the reflection, that he is doomed, how soon he knows not, to undergo an eternal separation from it.

ESSAY X.

JUSTICE.

REMOVE from mankind the mean temptation of deviating from her paths, and scarcely a character could be found, that would not practically admire the maxims of Justice.

There has been a sort of rivalship among mankind, who should most excel in proclaiming her worth. While Poets, with all the fire of verse, have made the attempt, Painters and Sculptors, by the most lively and expressive imagery, have not been less animated

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in her cause. Philosophers have sought to do her homage, with all the formality of proud disquisition. Orators have found in justice, a grand and interesting subject for the pomp of declamation and dignity of address. Statesmen and Warriors, ennobled by resentment, when justice was offended, have under her banners been dignified by heroic deaths. Even the guilty, who are smarting under her correction, will assert her rectitude. The criminal, while he yet gazes on the affrighting process of his execution, cannot allow the silver cords of life to be stretched asunder, till he bears justice harmless, and confesses that her ways are right; and will convey with his last breath, a tribute of respect to her sacred name." Among the four *cardinal* virtues, justice is therefore most deservedly classed.

However multiplied are her laws, and however difficult may be the explanation of some of them, in their political adaptation to different

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ent countries and habits of society, yet, in the grand concerns of moral justice, to which this short Essay is confined, ignorance and evasion have no hiding-place. On the tablet of conscience it is written with the finger of God, "*Do unto others as you would they should do unto you.*" The command is short—the language is plain—the duty is imperious!—and while loudly extolled in principle, this divine maxim should equally be regarded in practice: for whatever is morally bad, ought not, in any view of the subject to be considered as politically right: but by the manners of the greater part of society, every advantage that can be taken, especially in the course of traffick, which the laws have not specifically branded with the name of *dishonesty*, is termed *just*.

In the busy walks of merchandise, conscience must not too much intrude, lest a fresh importation of what may be thought at present *scarce*, or the circulation of *truth* by

by disappointing the schemes of *falsehood* might be the dreadful consequences of her interposition: nor must the voice of justice be too boisterous within the precincts of the tradesman's counter. To the *scales* which are her emblem, he is no stranger, and these with the public, should have *weight*. If new taxation on his wares, for which he has not *amply provided*, should *tempt* the upright man to take alarm, and plentifully excise his customers in quiet retail, for some hoarded stock, which may have entirely escaped an additional impost on him, "it is only in the way of *trade*," and therefore in the way of *justice*,—of exactly observing the *golden rule*, and "*doing as he would be done unto.*" With very few exceptions, alas! this is the conduct of mankind, and the charge is *too general* to admit of particular allusion: like vultures, men thus prey on each other, and under the pretence of justice, excercise every unworthy artifice of monopoly, forestalling, and oppression!

"*Justice*,"

"*Justice*," says a respectable writer,* "is even still more, if possible, the support of society than *truth*; inasmuch as a man may be *more* injurious by his actions than by his words. It is for this reason that the whole force of human law is bent to restrain injustice, and the happiness of every society will increase in proportion to this restraint.

"We very much err, however, if we suppose that every thing *within the bounds of law* is *justice*. The law was intended only for *bad men*; and it is impossible to make the meshes of it so strait but that many great enormities will escape. The well-meaning man, therefore, knowing that the law was not made for him, consults a better guide, his own conscience, informed by religion. And, indeed, the great difference between the *good* and the *bad* man consists in this: the good man will do nothing but what his *conscience will allow*; the bad man will do any thing

* Gilpin.

which the law cannot reach. It would, indeed, be endless to describe the various ways in which a man may be dishonest within the limits of law. They are as various as our intercourse with mankind."

Commit not, therefore, on the sacred name of justice, the foul sacrilege of perverting its upright designs, by unprincipled arts. Justice not only enjoins the strictest integrity of dealing, but likewise comprehends the exercise of every virtue, which reason prescribes or society expects; and the first reward which that godlike principle diffuses, is the consciousness, that in all respects, we are faithful to it.

"Remember *March*—the ides of *March* remember!
Did not great *Julius* bleed for justice sake?
What villain touch'd his body, that did stab,
And not for justice? What shall one of us,
That struck the foremost man of all this world,
But for supporting robbers; shall we now
Contaminate our fingers with base bribes,
And sell the mighty space of our large honours,
For so much trash, as may be grasped thus?
I had rather be a dog, and bay the moon,
Than such a *Roman*." *Julius Cæsar*, A. 4. Sc. 3.

ESSAY XI.

GENEROSITY.

THE excellent adage, which commands us "to be just before we are generous," is essential in its duty, to the character of every honest person.

Notwithstanding all that has been advanced on the subject of justice in the preceding Essay; it cannot be denied, that on some occasions, her decrees are rigorous, and that she is unacquainted with the delightful attribute of mercy.

"*Pay me that thou owest,*" is equally her language to the necessitous as it is to the affluent: if she exacts a performance of the terms of the *Bond,** and demands to "have a pound of flesh nearest to the merchant's heart," stern justice cannot relax, but to the unfeeling Shylock must award it: hence may be explained the motto which asserts, that the extremity of justice is the greatest oppression.†

To no purpose are the tender remonstrances of the generous Portia to alter the cruel determination, the implacable Jew still urges his right, sweet compassion pleads in vain, till at length, by a strong appeal to the avenging law, even justice is disarmed and mercy triumphs!

"In nothing," says the father of Roman eloquence, "do we so much resemble the Gods,

* Merchant of Venice.

† "Summum jus summa injuria."

Gods, as in actions of benificence."* With the truly generous are associated those liberal sentiments, those endearing affections, and all those noble exertions, which constitute the happiness and dignity of our nature, and most eminently distinguish the good and the great, from the disingenuous and contemptible!

To banish from the world the deeds of the generous, would be to deprive us of the cheerful sun. Every age and every nation have extolled this virtue, and even the narrow and contracted, though they have not the courage to embark in her cause, cannot but yield to it the reluctant sigh of private admiration!

From this celestial impulse is propelled, as it were, from heart to heart, every thing that can mitigate the sufferings of distress, wipe from

* Nullâ re homines propius accedunt ad Deos, quàm salutem hominibus dando.——Cic.

from the eye the tears of penitence, encourage the diffident, support the good, and reclaim the profligate! Nor can the generous, even to open enemies, refuse the claims of candour and humanity.

Animating are the proofs of ancient and modern greatness, in the delicate but generous treatment of distinguished warriors to the vanquished foe. Whatever has been conciliating in words, or soothing in manners, the brave, who are always generous, have been eager to concede!

"The opportunity of making happy," observes Rousseau, "is more scarce than we imagine; the punishment of missing it, is never to meet with it again; and the use we make of it, leaves us an eternal sentiment of satisfaction or repentance."

"From this alone," says another admired writer, "proceeds the noble disinterested friendship,

friendship, the melting love, the generous sentiment, the ardent gratitude, the soft compassion, the candid opinion, and all those strong energies of a good mind."

"Dear sensibility!" exclaims the celebrated Sterne, "source inexhausted of all that's precious in our joys, or costly in our sorrows! thou chainest thy martyr down upon his bed of straw, and it is thou who liftest him up to Heaven. Eternal fountain of our feelings! It is here I trace thee, and this is thy divinity which stirs within me: not, that in some sad and sickening moments, 'my soul shrinks back upon herself, and startles at destruction'—mere pomp of words!—but that I feel some generous joys and generous cares beyond myself—all comes from thee, great Sensorium of the world! which vibrates, if a hair of our head but falls upon the ground, in the remotest desert of thy creation."

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If generosity thus ennobles and amplifies the soul, and stands in direct opposition to every thing that is base; if even barbarians reverenced the name of generosity, and those who despised the laws of civility esteemed those of friendship, be not outdone in virtue by them, O Reader! if thou dost aspire to the Christian name; and if thou art desirous of the favour of thy Maker, the esteem of thy fellow-creature, and the applause of thy own conscience,—*Be generous!*

ESSAY XII.

TEMPERANCE.

IF from no better motives than personal comforts, men were to determine their different habits of life, those of order and regularity offer them by far the greatest bribes; and it will be only to compare with, what shall be hereafter said on excess, to set a true estimation on temperance.

A sober and temperate mode of living, besides acquring that commendation it deserves; in a very great degree secures to us the most desirable of all human blessings,

which is health! and while the mind equally participates with the body in this comfort, it is not only in a state of good defence against the boisterous attack of injurious passions, but maintains a greater share, than it would otherwise have, of vigour of intellect, of firmness of nerve, and cheerfulness of heart.

By temperance, which likewise is a cardinal virtue, much more is meant than the negative virtue of not eating or drinking to excess: for the subsequent inconveniences to which some constitutions are *particularly liable*, may make them very cautious in this respect, and impose on them, very reluctantly, an adequate abstemiousness.

While such a kind of temperance is very rational, it is at best but *selfish*, and therefore deducts from its merit; especially, so long as other desires, equally gross and voluptuous, but which do not so sensibly punish in

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the gratification, are allowed their scope of desire: where there is no *temptation* to vice, there can be no *proof* of *virtue*.

The amiableness and real commendation of this virtue are only in those, who resolutely oppose violent inclination, to give place to it, who are volunteers in her cause, and who, not through fear or servility, but from her own beauty and reasonableness obey her injunctions.

"Happy is the man," says Seneca, in his discourse on a happy life, "that eats only for hunger, and drinks only for thirst, that lives by reason, not by example." "Let us curb," adds he, "our appetites, and encourage virtue, let my bed be plain and clean, and my meat without much expense; occasional experiments of moderation give us the best proofs of firmness."

"A well-governed appetite is a great part

of liberty, it is the office of temperance to over rule us in our pleasures: some she rejects, others she qualifies and keeps within bounds, it is discretion sometimes to practise temperance, and accustom ourselves to a little; for there are many difficulties, both of time and place, that may force it upon us."

In commendation of the excellencies of this virtue, whether considered in a moral, religious, or physical point of view; language cannot express enough: but as *temperance* usually relates to the simplicity of eating, and *sobriety* to the moderation of drinking, we shall consider the abuses of these in a subsequent Essay.

" True bliss is frugal, every brook and field
" A full supply for life and nature yield,
" Excess of fortune kills, or cloys,
" But temp'rance is the health of joys."

ESSAY XIII.

EXCESS.

IT was the doctrine of Epicurus, that the happiness of mankind consisted in pleasure, not indeed such, as may be supposed to arise, from the indulgence of inordinate appetite, this was never the meaning of that Philosopher; the pleasure which he laboured to recommend to his disciples was, that which flowed from the enjoyments of the mind and the amiableness of virtue: and the best proof of his sincerity in that creed, as well as the best answer to all his opponents, appeared, in the excellent morality of his own life.

He

He cannot therefore, without being grossly misunderstood, be called, as he usually is, the founder of a voluptuous sect, who lived so abstemiously himself, or the patron of luxurious gormandizers and other excesses, who inculcated on his own disciples the lessons of moderation and temperance as most conducive to the happiness of the soul; ignorantly therefore, as well as falsely, are they called *Epicureans*, or the followers of Epicurus, who delight in personal sensualities.

To convey suitable ideas of what is to be understood by the term excess, there is no occasion of many words; but as it is impossible in matters of diet, especially, to lay down such definitions and rules as are applicable to every constitution and on every occasion; we shall only state in general terms, that whoever is conscious of passing the bounds of rational indulgence, becomes guilty of excess, and according to the degree

and

and modification of it, inconvenience and censure are more or less attached.

To restrain abuses in costly apparel and in eating; many nations, under the name of "*Sumptuary laws,*" have enacted penalties: but Baron Montesquieu is of opinion, that "luxury is necessary to monarchies, but injurious to democracies:" Judge Blackstone observes, "that, with regard to England, whose Government is compounded of both species, it may still be a dubious question how far private luxury is a public evil," and he observes, "that our Legislators, on this point, have several times changed their opinions, "for formerly," adds he, "there were many penal laws to restrain excess in apparel, which have been since repealed, but as to excess in diet," there still remains one ancient statute *unrepealed*, which ordains, "that no man shall be served at dinner or supper with more than two courses, except upon some great

great holyday, there specified, in which he may be served with three."*

Of the evils which result from intempeperance in diet, Mr. Addison has given this expressive description: "For my part," says he, "when I behold a fashionable table set out in all its magnificence, I fancy that I see gouts and dropsies, fevers, and lethargies, with other innumerable distempers, lying in ambuscade among the dishes."

They, who by plentiful and luxurious meals are in the habit of gorging the stomach, and loading the system with a greater variety of materials for disease and death, as unquestionably such do, than those who transgress in the *opposite extreme*, may justly be said to offend in a higher degree against the laws of nature, and in a more certain way to become their own suicides! they are, moreover, equally guilty of a notorious *abuse*

* *Vide* Blackstone's Commentaries.

abuse of those good things, which were sent only for our moderate use and in this respect are alike chargeable with immorality: a heavy meal, it is admitted, does not hurry the porter of it, into a delirium, as the same proportion of drink might do, but it nevertheless stupifies him by lethargy; while crudities and flatulencies are making their rumbling uproar in the distended carcass, which on some occasions, can only be relieved, by a few voluntary efforts to reject, what had been so greedily forced into it.

It becomes therefore the greatest reproach of our nature to wander from her simple paths, to commit as it were, a rape on the simplicity of her chaste desires, and by every art that imagination can invent, or extravagance procure, to riot in this most disgusting species of excess!

Having thus served the glutton, with a short but wholesome *meal*, the cup of the

Bacchanalian shall next be supplied, with a beverage equally salutary, and in greater abundance: we will for the present forbear the lectures of gravity, and our business with him shall be introduced in a more jocular kind of way, by first telling a story.

A German Physician, in the last century, in two large folios, made strange suppositions by droll contrast, and endeavoured to destroy vice, by affecting to cherish it. He makes a *Christopher Hegendorph* speak an oration to the University of Leipsick, in praise of drunkenness.—"Doubtless, illustrious auditors," says this Physician, "as I am a young man, and about to recommend drunkenness to grave and sober men, I shall seem to be doubly drunk—but pardon me, if I affirm, that I am not the first patron of drunkenness: intoxication is an antient, universal practice, Jews, Trojans, and Greeks, got drunk—*Noah* and *Lot* got drunk—The Greeks published encomiums on intoxication

tion—The Romans loved tippling—*Tiberius* and *Lucius Piso* used to sit at their cups three days and nights together—Egyptians, Saxons, and almost all people got drunk—as for the Monks, they could not possibly go through the services of their several orders, without plenty of liquor;—besides, liquor makes mirth, and mirth is life;—drinking also sets men a talking about religion; and farmers never dispute so clearly for *Luther* against *Eckius*, as when they are animated with strong liquor.—Poets and Preachers can do nothing without plenty of drink—and with it, what can they not do? but you will object, it is said in the Gospel, be not *overcharged with drunkenness*—can't you get drunk without getting *dead* drunk? St. *Paul's* advice merely is, *do not get drunk*—by which he only means, *do not get excessively drunk.*"

Surely the most experienced advocate for intoxication could not have given a more witty turn to his cause, than what this

writer did in perfect ridicule: in addition to those seeming encouragements already given, one may appear to be keeping up the joke, in offering some few ideas partly in the same way. And first of all, occasional freedom in drinking has been asserted to have its medical uses, particularly in languid, rickety constitutions; for by thus causing a stimulus, the blood is propelled to the smallest vessels, and by enlivening and making general the circulation, may give a prolific tendency to saturnine constitutions; and as body and mind mutually sympathize with each other, a fillip of this kind may, on some occasions, produce good effects on the disposition itself.

On such ocsasions, the reserved man, has been communicative and entertaining, the coward has talked of heroism, and the beggar of his great descent: the wretched have ceased to brood over their miseries, have been inspired with hope, and what may appear

pear marvellous, drink has warmed the cold heart of the niggard himself with sentiments of generosity! An eminent moral writer thus reasons on the subject;

"Excessive drinking degrades man, alienates his reason, at least for a time, and destroys it in the end; but, after all, the love of wine is not a crime; it seldom occasions the commission of vice; it makes man stupid, not wicked; for one slight quarrel it produces, a hundred lasting connexions are formed thereby. Drunkards are generally sincere and open hearted; they are, almost always, good, honest, faithful, and brave, even to a fault.

"How many apparent virtues conceal real vices; the wise man is sober through temperance, the villain through imposture. In a country where bad morals, intrigues, treasons, and adulteries prevail, we doubt a state of indiscretion, where the heart shows itself without

without our knowledge. The people who abhor drunkenness most, are every where those who are most interested to keep themselves from it; in Switzerland it is almost esteemed, at Naples it is dreaded; but, in the end, which is most to be feared, the intemperance of the Swiss, or the reserve of the Italian?

"Let us not slander, even vice; is it not disgustful enough of itself? Wine does not occasion wickedness, but discloses it. He who killed Clytus in a drunken fit, murdered Philotas in cold blood. If drunkenness has its phrensies, what passion has not also? The difference is, that the others remain in the heart; but, this is kindled and extinguished in a moment. Except this fury, which is presently over, and easily avoided, be assured, that, whoever commits wicked actions when in liquor, breeds bad designs when sober."

But,

But, alas! where is the vice, for which ingenuity may not contrive some specious apology?

There was once a Philosopher, who wrote a large volume in praise of a quartan Ague; and private vices have been also said to be public benefits.

To speak however on the subject seriously: it must be allowed, that intoxication is as immoral, as it is injurious and destructive: 'tis reason which distinguishes men from beasts, but when that is obscured, as it is by drunkenness, this honourable mark of superiority becomes degraded—it is set aside!

Justly therefore did the Spartan law-giver prohibit unnecessary drinking, which debilitates both body and mind.

At Athens, if an Archon* was convicted of

* A chief Magistrate.

of being drunk, he was, by the laws of *Solon*, put to death; and in an island* which abounded with wine, in order to restrain the inhabitants from the immoderate use of it; their law-giver,† who was one of the seven sages, enacted, that whoever committed a crime, being drunk, should suffer double punishment: but the great *Aristotle*, though he commends this law, tells us at the same time, that there is more of policy than justice in it.

The Roman law indeed was not so severe, but made considerable allowances for that vice.‡ "It has been observed," says Judge Blackstone, "that the real use of strong liquors, and the abuse of them, by drinking to excess, depend much on the temperature of the climate in which we live."

The

* Mitylene. † Pittacus.

‡ Per vinum delapsis capitalis pœna remittitur.

The same indulgence which may be necessary to make the blood move in Norway, would make the Italian mad. "A German, therefore," says the President Montesquieu, "drinks through custom, founded upon constitutional necessity; a Spaniard drinks through choice, or out of mere wantonness, and therefore, drunkenness," he observes, "ought to be more severely punished, where it makes men mischievous and mad, as in Spain and Italy, than where as in Northern climates, it only makes them stupid and heavy."

Sir Edward Coke tells us, "that the drunkard voluntarily exposes himself to every sort of vice, and thereby exasperates the crime."

What secrets has not intoxication divulged, what friends has it not injured, what characters has it not scandalized, into what broils and disasters has it not precipitated those, whom it has seduced, and then betrayed?

What horrors of mind surprise the drunkard, when he makes his first morning yawn, on the bed, to which, like a corpse, a few hours before, he had been conveyed by bearers!

Before the clammy lips are freed from their adhesion; while, the furry, parched tongue within, jags like a file, and the blood-shot eyes are burning in their sockets, and the excited arteries are fiercely throbbing against the delirious head—while the foul stomach is heaving to disgorge its sickening load, and the whole body is in one general blaze of fever and trepidation; conscience takes the opportunity of smiting with loud and bitter accusation this tormented debauchee! it represents to him, as in one general group of action, confused thoughts, and dreadful apprehensions of what might have been his conduct at this season of sobriety.

To lull away, if possible, these sensations which distract his very soul, and flash to his

his bewildered recollection, words, and manners, disgraceful to his character and injurious to his interest; in vain does he attempt to smother them in rest: but the unrefreshing, sultry bed yields to him no balmy sleep! he therefore quits it—but scarcely has he courage to meet the light of day! Unconscious it may be, of *all* that he has done at this unguarded season, he yet knows *enough*, deeply to exercise his humility, his own reproach, and sorrow.

To the mercy of *any* report he may be thus exposed. Ashamed to appear before his friends, he is afraid to meet his enemies: and while the former are willing to excuse the fault; he may have sadly committed himself to the malice of the latter.

"O that men should put an enemy in their mouths, to steal away their brains! That we should with joy, revel, pleasure, and applause, transform ourselves into beasts."

Truly acquainted with the human heart was *He*, who thus admonishes mankind:—"*Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright, at the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.*"

Would any reasonable being, therefore, to gratify a *present* moment, subject himself to this legacy of mournful, perhaps irrecoverable ills?—For besides the immediate mischiefs we have just enumerated, intoxication lays the foundation of the most serious and fatal diseases: by destroying the texture of the blood, it paves the way to dropsies and the endless tribe of nervous affections, it gives pulmonary complaints, palsies, gouts, apoplexies, and not unfrequently *sudden death!* Like the sword, intoxication has slain its thousands! It would require very little argument to prove, that water alone, with some few exceptions, is sufficient to answer all the purposes of health and spirits; and it is well worth

worth the observation, that animals who undergo the severest labour and fatigue, are amply succoured and invigorated by water only; which fluid seems to have been designed as the principal and universal liquor of nature. The juice of the grape, in reasonable doses, was, no doubt, a very primitive drink; but the preparations of various ardent spirits, appear to have been, but of modern and degenerate invention. The greatest feats have been performed by the most *sober* men, and water-drinkers have been found to be the most prolific, cheerful, and courageous!

"If one were to prescribe," says a physical writer, "for the cowardizing of a nation, it should be the bowl of intemperance and a Dalilah's lap, which are charms to effeminate an hero, and metamorphose a lion into a timorous hare.

The most effeminate climes, by temperance alone, have produced the most heroic and magnani-

magnanimous people, such as were the Persians, and likewise the Romans, before luxury and dissipation enervated their manners!

For accidental ebriety some few apologies may be offered. The different qualities of the same kind of liquor, may have very unexpected effects on different constitutions. In extenuation of the guilt of *Noah*, it has been observed, that he was unacquainted with the inebriating quality of fermentation in liquor. Hilarity and other circumstances of society, together with the variation of animal spirits, and the difference of seasons, may have occasionally betrayed into intoxication, even such, as deserve the name of sober men. On these, as on other occasions of accident; *liberal* and *good* minds are ready to put the fairest construction, and would rather conceal, than *publish*, such instances of human imperfection.

But

But though we have ventured to suggest thus far, by way of apology for those, who may sometimes be thus *overtaken with a fault*, let not the *Drunkard* or the *Sot* dare to presume, that any palliation is here offered for the contemptible and destructive habits of him, who either drivels like an idiot, or raves as a madman. Well might the Lacedæmonians, therefore hope, that by representing in their slaves, the degrading appearance of drunkenness, it would be sufficient to deter others from the vice.

Whatever may be the *motives* of different characters of mankind to a life of sobriety, the salutary effects are the same.

If the knave be sober through design, and the invalid from necessity; the wise man will be so from choice, and the good man from a sense of duty.

There

There are, says an eminent Poet,

"——— Yet unnumber'd ills that lie unseen
In the pernicious draught: the word obscene,
Or harsh, (which once elanc'd must ever fly
Irrevocable;) the too prompt reply,
Seed of severe distrust, and fierce debate,
What we should shun, and what we ought to hate.
Add too, the blood impoverish'd, and the course
Of health suppress'd by wine's continued force.
Unhappy man! whom sorrow thus, and rage,
To different ills alternately engage.
Who drinks, alas! but to forget; nor sees
That melancholy sloth, severe disease,
Memory confus'd, and interrupted thought,
Death's harbingers lie latent in the draught;
And in the flowers that wreathe the sparkling bowl,
Fell adders hiss, and poisonous serpents roll."

This Essay shall now conclude, with a short, but pithy anecdote.

It is somewhere said, "That the Devil gave to an Hermit the choice of *three* crimes: two of them were of the most *atrocious* nature, the third was to be *drunk*." The poor man made choice of the last, as seemingly the most innocent; but mark the sequel; when he was drunk, he committed the other two dreadful sins!

ESSAY XIV.

DEATH.

A Persian King, after he had stedfastly beheld an immense army from his magnificent throne in the plains of Asia, was observed to shed a torrrent of tears! on being asked by one of his Generals the cause of that dejection, he gave this answer:

"I weep," says the feeling monarch, "when I consider, that before one hundred years, all this company will be in the grave!"

The consideration was great and awful; and while Xerxes delighted himself in so grand a spectacle; the knowledge that so fine and proud an assemblage of warriors must, in the natural order of things, be so quickly reduced *to dust and ashes*, shook his firmness, humbled his ambition, and penetrated him with distress!

In the momentous concerns of our present Essay; writers, as well as speakers have found a very sublime topic, on which, they could alarm the passions, and effectually display the pomp of declamation: but in this attempt, we will take a view of the subject, in a manner more interesting and plain.

In our Essay against *Self-murder*, it has been stated, that the fear of death is implanted in us by the author of nature, with the wise design of exciting a proper solicitude for the preservation of life; and death for this reason, and especially the consequences

of

of it, in some future state of existence, has been truly called, the "King of Terrors."

Nor is it a philosophic contempt of death, unsupported by the testimony of a good conscience, and the well-grounded hopes of a better life, which can render its approach to the Christian believer, in any character, less formidable than that, which has been mentioned: "but calm and serene as the glassy sea," unruffled by fears, or disturbed by anxieties; the virtuous and the pious cordially receive the advances of that messenger, who is destined to *deliver* them "*from the burden of the flesh.*" From the anxious concerns of prosperity—the several trials of adversity—the unmerited cruelty of enemies—the heart-felt solicitude about friends—the delusions of hope—and the satieties of possession; from each and all of these, and others without end, in the unmeasured catalogue of human sufferings, either in *mind*,

body, or *estate*, does the hand of *time* sign a release, welcome and glorious!

Insensible to the changes of boisterous elements and the revolutions of states; those who have put off the fragile armour of mortals, are calmly deposited into those mansions of peace, where in the comfortable language of him, who once so ardently prayed a change, "*The wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary be at rest.*"

It was the opinion of an ancient writer, "that the God's concealed from men the happiness of death, that they might be the better reconciled to endure the pains of life." A famous and warlike nation, without being instructed by teachers, but purely from their own observations of the state and circumstances of human existence, were accustomed to celebrate the birth of men with mourning, and their death with joy: and the writer of

Ecclesiastes

Ecclesiastes has not scrupled to assert, that "*the day of death is better than the day of one's birth.*"

If the heathen Socrates, in the face of his Judges, before he was condemned to drink the fatal draught of hemlock, could tell them, that to die was a pleasure, since "he was going to hold converse with the greatest heroes of antiquity:"—if Cato could proudly exclaim, "Let guilt or fear disturb man's rest, Cato knows neither of them, indifferent in his choice to live or die:" if the moral Seneca, when sentenced to die by the mandate of an infamous Emperor, could, with undaunted resolution and serene countenance, watch the vital stream escaping from its channel, and before his weeping friends, during this lingering operation, could read animated and sensible discourses in the cause of virtue; take shame to thyself whoever thou art, in this age of *Christian* philosophy, with all these instances of fortitude, and the nobler

nobler ones of *saints* and *martyrs* at being a *slave* to the fears of death!

It is just as natural to *die* as to be *born*. Great indeed is the number of those, who, while sublimer thoughts should dignify the soul, and give wings to hope, are clinging about this perishing earth, as ivy does about the oak, and would greedily purchase, at an immense cost, if money could effect it, an enlargement of life, or even a short respite, from what inevitably *must* happen at last.

It is therefore no longer matter of astonishment, that with sentiments unworthy as these are, of candidates for a higher designation, that every thing, which reluctantly jogs the memory, that time is beating against them the quick march of dissolution, is received with aversion, nay, with horror! The sight of a coffin, the sound of a passing knell, the picture of a hatchment, have even with

well

well taught minds, too much of dispiriting influence.

The anxieties of death are unquestionably lessened or augmented, according to the different forms and ceremonies of its approach. He who dies in the field of battle, is surveyed with feelings rather of emulation than of pain. The culprit, who is attended to the gallows with all the dismal forms of justice, excites in the spectator, emotions of a most painful nature: it is not therefore the simple act of *dying*, which produces this difference of sensation, but only the variation of its *form*.

To the most covetous of life, irksome and even dreadful would be that sentence, which decreed against him, an *immortality* on earth, or that he could *never* die! for though it be in the power of the weakest instrument to deprive us of life, it should be reflected on as the greatest blessing, that it is not in the

the power of the *strongest*, to deprive us of the relief of death.

Excellent was the advice of Seneca against the fear of death, when he tells us, that to avoid the dread of it, we should frequently contemplate on that event. But like to an unwelcome guest, we elude the visit: still the lectures of time will obtrude themselves, and in spite of every artifice *will be heard.*

From twenty even to threescore, we are very adroit to parry off the address of age, and refer it to some one *older;* but when *disguise* will serve no longer, and we have rusted out a few years more, it is then only, with some reluctance and reserve, that we give in our names to the list of antiquity!

And at this period, where courteous and respectful attention ought chiefly to *begin*; to the dishonour of youth, of both sexes, it too often unfeelingly ends. We are apt to compli-

compliment each other, and gloss over the intermediate gradations from thirty to forty with the name of *youth*; but that forsooth is, *never to return again*, when we were acquainted with the age of twenty-five!

If the aggregate mass of human existence were put together, and every individual had his share equally apportioned; it might not exceed the pittance of *thirty* years! but not insisting on this calculation, we will allow, what in nature we know is not to be allowed, that to *every* person, the age of sixty, or even of seventy were granted; yet surely he cannot be said to be young on his journey, who has already reached the half of it: a middle age is all the compliment that can be due to him. It is then downright mockery to say the same of one, who has completed *Half a Century!*

It is not to produce the hoary veteran of eighty, or it may be of ninety, who, on pur-

pose to excite astonishment, will crack his joke, and laugh at the wrecks of time; such *rare* characters ought no more to be quoted as a *general* estimate of longevity, than others, who not having run the half of that race, are so often to be opposed against them.

The ancients marked six different stages of life.—Pueritia, which commenced at the fifth year, they called *Childhood*;—Adolescentia, *Youth*, which was understood by them to be from the eighteenth, and even to the twenty-fifth year;—Juventus, *the age* from twenty-five to the thirty-fifth year;—Virilis Ætas, *Manhood*, from the thirty-fifth to the fiftieth year;—Senectus, *Old Age*, from fifty to sixty;—Crepita Ætas, *Decrepit Age*, which ends in death!

Well was the question put, "*What is life?*" and well was it answered by the same *inspired* author, in these words: "*It is even a vapour, that*

that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

" Life glides away, Lorenzo! like a brook,
" For ever changing, unperceived the change."

Not any thing but the closest appeals of affection, and the offices due to surviving friends, could damp the good man's desire of death; these indeed, while filling the eye with sympathetic tears, convey to the heart a longing wish, to have a respite, even from his sublimest joys, to mourn a little longer, "*in this vale of sorrow and of tears,*" to sweeten, if he can, the journey of his fellow flesh and blood; but as a writer truly observes, "when such friends part, it is the *survivor* dies."

The Gentoo's have a proverb which runs thus: "Sitting is better than walking, sleep is better than sitting, but death is better than either."

As in vegetable life, so it happens to us: there is a seed time, a spring, a summer, an autumn, and a winter of our existence; and like unto the crops of the field and garden, generations of men and women, by an invariable law of nature, in the same manner succeed each other.

But since we came into life progressively, it seems congenial with the feelings of nature to be dismissed from it in the same leisurely manner; and hence, in addition to other considerations; is a reason, why sudden and violent deaths, usually affect the mind with most awful sensations: to escape however a tedious and very painful separation of matter and spirit, a quick release were most devoutly to be wished; *but not otherwise.*

If death were to commit such ravages on the soul, as utterly to destroy it from the capability of future existence, dismal truly would be that extinguisher which degraded

it

Sir Lindsay's Book Blueberry Berks 1821

it into *annihilation:* but blessed be God, for informing the conscience, by the secret whispers of nature, and the clear light of Revelation, that death is only the passport to another life, and while the *resolutely wicked* have every thing to fear in it, those, who are not "*weary in well doing*," have every thing to *hope!*

In the last conflict of nature, comfortably will they feel the sentiments of an admired poet, who represents the language "of a dying Christian to his soul," in these animating and celestial words:

VITAL spark of heav'nly flame,
Quit, oh quit this mortal frame:
Trembling, hoping, ling'ring, flying,
Oh the pain, the bliss of dying!
Cease, fond nature, cease thy strife,
And let me languish into life.

Hark! they whisper; Angels say,
Sister Spirit, come away.
What is this absorbs me quite?
Steals my senses, shuts my sight,
Drowns my spirits, draws my breath?
Tell me, my Soul, can this be death?

The

The world recedes; it disappears
Heaven opens on my eyes! my ears
With sounds seraphic ring:
Lend, lend your wings! I mount! I fly!
O Grave! where is thy Victory?
O Death! where is thy Sting?

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